

Newsletter of IDEAS



JUL | AUG 2020

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

IDEAS does
information
so you can
do life.

Disability Information
Free, Accurate & Independent



info@ideas.org.au



1800 029 904



www.ideas.org.au



[@disabilityinformation](https://www.facebook.com/disabilityinformation)



[@IDEASAU](https://twitter.com/IDEASAU)

I'M FREE
Take Me!



Editorial - *Diana Palmer* *IDEAS Executive Officer*

Welcome to this edition!

Welcome to this winter edition of the Newsletter of IDEAS. You will find this edition jam packed with information relating to going about your daily life in a 'COVID World' and looking at some benefits we hope may come about as we move beyond that world.

You will also find information about the activities of the Royal Commission into the abuse and neglect of people with disability.

The DSS Disability Information Helpline that was implemented in April to provide information for people with disability around COVID has proved to be a successful tool. It has helped to get information to people who were having trouble sourcing it from other places. The experience, skills and knowledge of our Information Officers were turned to focus on connecting people needing information and assistance about money matters, health and safety, accessing testing and the ongoing need to find relevant services and supports. IDEAS has been able to meet the demand on this line with the support of partners in the project such as MedHealth, Blue Knot and the advocacy sector. The Disability Information Helpline will continue to operate while there is a need on 1800 643 787. You can also contact IDEAS directly on 1800 029 904 and our Information Officers will be able to help you.

We have heard recently that funding of Advocacy services in NSW has been extended to December 2020. While this is positive, we are still waiting for a response from the Government to the Ageing and Disability Commissioners report into advocacy provision in NSW and look forward to the implementation of the recommendations. It is crucial for medium term planning (let alone long term planning) for organisations that the ongoing review and reforms of advocacy and information begin to be resolved so the sector can look ahead and focus energy on the future and supporting people with disability, rather than being consumed in dealing with funding issues.

I hope you enjoy this edition.

Regards,
Diana

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Wiradjuri Elder and artist Paul Constable Calcott has depicted the story of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission) in an artwork called 'Respectful Listening'. The artwork uses bright colours in a traditional dot painting style with Indigenous symbols. We have chosen it as the cover of this newsletter.

The artwork illustrates the journey of the seven Disability Royal Commissioners carrying a message stick across the country to collect stories from people with disability, their families and communities. It shows the different ways the Royal Commission can gather people’s stories, through private sessions, public hearings and informal yarning circles.

Artist and Elder Uncle Paul, who works for FPDN and lives with disability, said:

“ To get to play some small part in this whole process, is huge for me and I hope the artwork encourages all Australians with a story to tell about violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability, to come forward. ”

In commissioning this artwork, the Royal Commission is making a significant and culturally sensitive communication to First Nations people with disabilities, their families and communities. Uncle Paul’s work communicates that the Commission is a safe and secure place to be heard.

FIRST PERSONS DISABILITY NETWORK CONTACT DETAILS

- 02 9267 4195
- www.fpdn.org.au
- IDEAS ID: 81489**

Information sourced from Disability Royal Commission website.

Flu Shot Still Important



The Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis has significantly impacted our daily lives. As restrictions ease, it is more important than ever to make sure you get your flu shot this season. If you didn't get the shot in April or May then you should get it now.

People with disability are more at risk of complications arising from both COVID-19 and seasonal flu (Influenza) than the general population. The National Immunisation Program has more influenza vaccines for the 2020 flu season than ever before and more than double than last year.


Some people are entitled to a free vaccine because they are at greater risk of complications arising from seasonal influenza (and COVID-19).

They are:

- Pregnant women
- Children between 6 months and 5 years of age
- People over 65 years of age
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders of any age over 6 months
- People with chronic health conditions (like asthma, heart disease, diabetes and kidney disease) of any age over 6 months.

It is important as a community that we do all we can to combat both seasonal influenza and COVID-19 by getting the flu shot, maintaining social distancing and following health guidelines and government policies.

INFLUENZA IMMUNISATION SERVICE CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 671 811

 <https://bit.ly/influenza-immunisation-service>

 IDEAS ID: 104178

Information sourced from Department of Health website.

Information Survey

This survey was offered to our newsletter readers in the May June edition. Thank you to everyone who took the time to answer the questions and provide feedback to IDEAS.

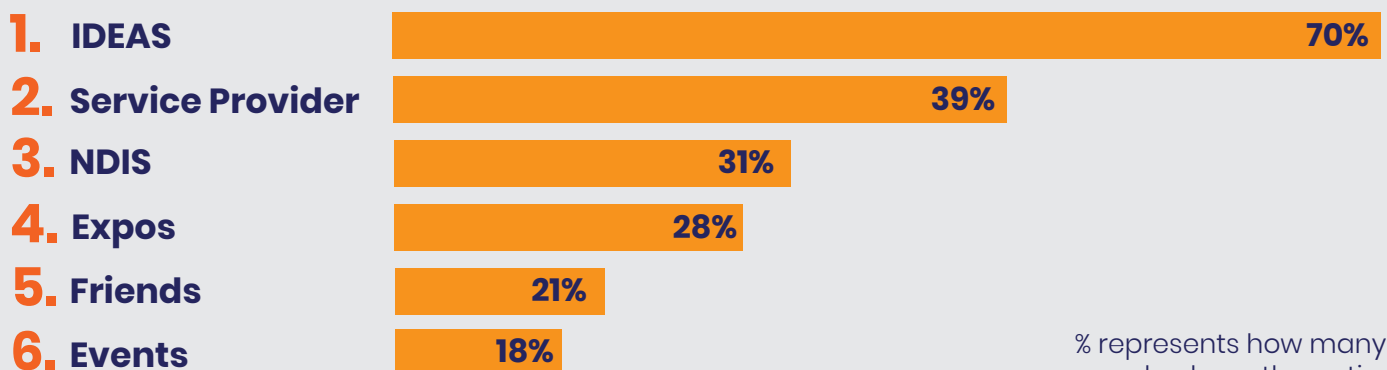
The winner of the \$500 Coles voucher is Shawn Phua of Brisbane. He was thrilled and really appreciated his prize. See the results from the survey below.

93.3%

Need information to make decisions about getting services and supports to maintain my independent life.

1. **Printed information**
2. **Email**
3. **Face to face**
4. **Websites**
5. **Over the phone**

Who do you get your information from?



% represents how many people chose the option

Are NDIS Participants

42%

32%

Want to be an NDIS Participant



What do you do with your information?

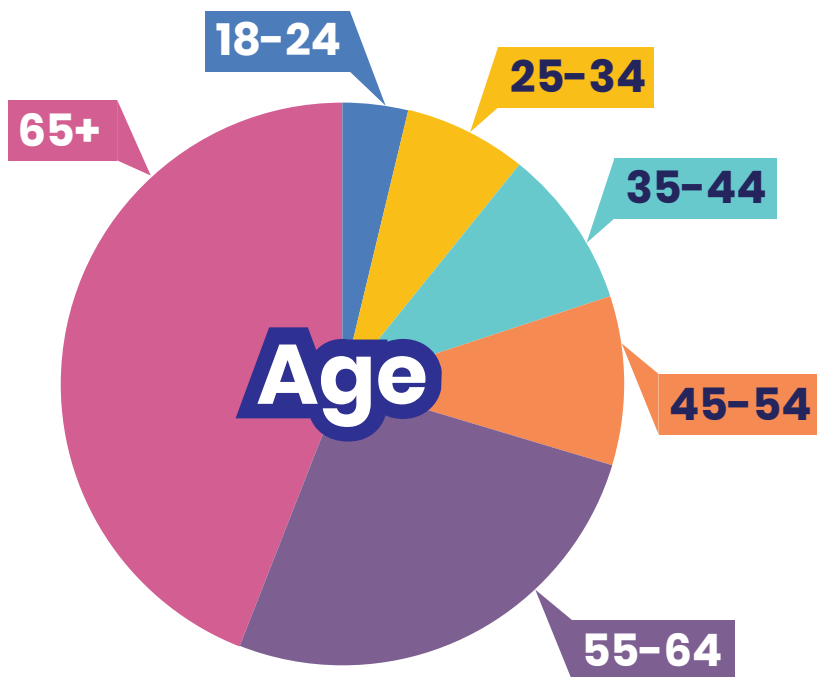
1. **Fix the problem myself**
2. **Tell others**
3. **Put it in my NDIS plan**



What makes you trust your best information source?



% represents how many people chose the option





Radio reading service 2RPH, a partner of IDEAS, is excited to be launching a suite of new programming this year. These programs will increase the station’s engagement with the disability and community sectors, highlight the achievements of people with a disability, empower them through opportunities for self-representation and draw attention to key issues affecting their community. The new programs include Disability News, New Voices and Inclusive Agenda.

Disability News is a short morning segment covering key policy announcements, schemes, initiatives and major events of most relevance to our core community, specifically those who have a print disability.

New Voices introduces the written works of emerging and under-represented writers, by interviewing a writer critiquing another writer’s work.

Inclusive Agenda will offer a platform for political and bureaucratic decision-makers, researchers and innovators to discuss current and proposed initiatives that affect people with a disability, the elderly and the marginalised. It will be launched in the second half of 2020.

These new programs join established ones, such as Ablequest, a program examining assistive technology and initiatives for those living with disabilities; Animates, where stories of people with disabilities and their furry friends provide a heartfelt glimpse into these special relationships and Travel Time, which gives travel-minded individuals ideas on destinations with accessibility options.

100.5FM & 1224AM RADIO 2RPH CONTACT DETAILS

✉ info@2rph.org.au

🌐 www.2rph.org.au

📍 IDEAS ID: 40042

Royal Commission



The next public hearing for the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability (Disability Royal Commission) is set to take place in Sydney during the week commencing 17 August 2020, given that there are no significant changes in circumstances. This public hearing will be examining the experiences of people with disability throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Disability Royal Commission is also still seeking submissions from people with disabilities, their carers and supporters in response to other specific topics or lines of investigation.

Issues Papers ask questions about a topic that is important to the Royal Commission enquiry process. The Disability Royal Commission is asking you to share any information you think will help the Commission to do its work.

Emergency Planning and Response

Respond by 17 July 2020

The Black Summer Bushfire and COVID-19 crises have been unprecedented in terms of scale and overall danger faced by Australians in recent times. People with disability can be severely affected by emergencies and may be at a higher risk of experiencing violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation during these times.

The Commission wants to hear how people with disability are included (or should be included) in emergency planning and response.

Sometimes information and news on emergencies are not accessible to people with disability. For example, it is not in plain English or not captioned.

Some people with disability need help with meals, toileting, showering and getting dressed. Making sure these continue and are delivered safely during an emergency, especially in evacuations, is essential.

People with disability have also faced barriers accessing medications, ambulances, and health supplies like Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in emergencies.

The Emergency Planning and Response Issues Paper asks 11 questions to help people and organisations to share their stories. You can answer any, all or none of the questions – whatever you feel is relevant.

Rights and Attitudes

Respond by 31 July 2020

The Rights and Attitudes Issues Paper looks at the awareness and recognition of the rights of people with disability. The Commission wants to learn more about the level of awareness that people with disability, and the wider community, have about the rights of people with disability.

It is also interested in attitudes towards people with disability and wants to know more about how those attitudes develop and what can be done to change them.

Employment

Respond by 14 August 2020

The Employment Issues Paper is looking at the experiences of people with disability in employment. The Commission wants to understand why people with disability are less likely to be in paid work and have a job and have lower incomes or less pay when employed than people without disability. The Issues Paper is also seeking information about people's experiences of discrimination at work and how well specific programs designed to increase the employment of people with disability are working. The Employment Issues Paper asks 9 questions to help people and organisations to provide responses.

Restrictive Practices

Respond by 28 August 2020

The Restrictive Practices Issues Paper looks at the use and impact of restrictive practices on people with disability. Restrictive practices are actions that stop people from moving or doing what they want and can include isolation and physical and chemical restraints.

The Disability Royal Commission wants to know about the effects of restrictive practice on people with disability and is also interested in understanding how laws, policies and practices around restrictive practices can be improved to better prevent and protect people with disability from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The Restrictive Practice Issues Paper asks 13 questions to help people and organisations to provide responses.

First Nations People with Disability

Respond by 11 September 2020

The Issues Paper on the experiences of First Nations People with Disability is asking the public to share their views about what they think governments, institutions and communities can do to prevent violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of first nations peoples with disability. The Commission is interested in both positive and negative examples of how laws, policies and practices in different settings are working. This can be in areas such as education, healthcare, workplaces, the justice system, home, online communities and families.

These Issues Papers are available in Easy Read, PDF and DOCX.

Making A Submission






You can share your experiences of violence, neglect, abuse or exploitation with the Royal Commission. This helps the Commission learn more about the problem and how it can help prevent it in the future.

You can share your experiences by making a submission or applying for a private session with a Commissioner. Submissions can be made in several ways and in any language, including over the phone, online, by email, post or even through video or audio recordings.

Getting Help

The Disability Royal Commission has set up support services for people with disability affected by or interacting with the Commission process. These supports are free to use and include counselling, advocacy, financial and legal help.

DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION CONTACT DETAILS

-  1800 517 199
-  GPO Box 1422, Brisbane, QLD, 4001
-  DRcenquiries@royalcommission.gov.au
-  www.disability.royalcommission.gov.au
-  IDEAS ID: 95338

Changes to NDIS



There have been some big changes to the way the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) works due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis.

These changes include a temporarily more flexible approach for low cost assistive technology (AT) items, two new support items for cleaning and higher intensity support for participants living in Supported Independent Living, and online versions of the Access Request Form and Supporting Evidence Form for people looking to access the scheme for the first time.

Assistive Technology Changes

Part of the National Disability Insurance Agency's Coronavirus pandemic response involves flexibility in core funding which will allow participants to purchase low cost assistive technology. This applies to assistive technology that allows participants to maintain physical distancing and to ensure the continuation of NDIS supports where face to face services have been replaced with telehealth or other distance-based delivery models.

Participants can spend up to \$1500 on low cost assistive technology items from their existing budgets. Participants should not spend more than \$750 on electronic devices (no more than \$600 on computer tablets) needed to maintain existing services. This new approach acknowledges that many face-to-face services have been suspended and some capacity building supports and interpreting services which cannot be delivered face to face are now being delivered online.

This is a time limited policy which will be in place until September 2020 and will be reviewed at the end of June 2020.

Supported Independent Living Changes

The NDIA have made changes to the way the NDIS participants living in Supported Independent Living (SIL) can use their NDIS funding for cleaning and for increased daily support needs, including PPE (personal protective equipment).

Access Request Changes

The Access Request Form and Supporting Evidence Form can both now be completed online and submitted by email. This allows potential participants who are practicing social or physical distancing during the COVID crisis to use existing proof of their disability or to utilise telehealth services to get proof and to begin the NDIS access process from home without the need for face to face consultations.


Go to **www.ndis.gov.au** to find and fill out the forms, or for more information phone IDEAS on 1800 029 904 or the NDIS on 1800 800 110. We can send you hard copies if you can't access the online ones.

Further changes to the way participants access and use the scheme due to the COVID crisis were also announced. These include:

- NDIS Plans can now be extended up to two years, ensuring continuity of support and increasing capacity of NDIA staff to focus on urgent and required changes to plans.
- Face-to-face planning shifted to telephone meetings where possible (keep in mind, in 2017 the NDIA moved to face to face meetings where possible after hundreds of complaints about access to the scheme by telephone failing many people with both sensory and physical disabilities).
- An action plan to ensure NDIS participants and their families continue to receive the essential disability supports they need.
- Proactive outreach to high-risk participants and sharing of data with states and territories to ensure continuity of supports.
- Financial assistance to providers to support retention of workers.

Things are changing quickly, so check with the NDIS for the latest information.

NDIS CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 800 110

 www.ndis.gov.au

 IDEAS ID: 71366

Information sourced from NDIS website.



Inclusive Sport

Regardless of ability, sport can benefit everyone in the community. People with disability however seem to have fewer opportunities to join in sports than other people.

Unwilling or unable to be included, may be the way some clubs and organisations think regarding people with disability and their participation in sport. An uncertainty of how to be inclusive may be a factor, even with an evident desire and ability amongst people with disability.

A lack of promotion of the opportunities or adaptations available with clubs may mean people with disability feel excluded.

The benefits of inclusion

- Your brand and reputation are enhanced
- Clubs can be seen to be 'walking the talk' for inclusion
- Sport regulatory obligations are being met
- Potential legal risks are decreased while governance and risk management are increased
- Membership is more attractive
- Participation opportunities are enhanced
- Sponsors may be more willing to be involved
- Volunteers may be encouraged to offer their support
- A more positive image and greater publicity is ensured
- A better connected and diverse sports community is provided
- Barriers are broken down and social inclusion is promoted

The 'Are You On Board?' (AYOB) campaign was developed by VICSPORT to generate talk around diversity and inclusion within Victorian sport. Raising awareness and assisting State Sport associations, Clubs, Leagues and Associations to spread positive messages about the benefits of diversity and inclusion in sport are its main aims.



The Access for All Abilities program is a Victorian Government initiative which has supported inclusive sport and recreation opportunities for people with a disability for over 15 years.

For details on what clubs can do to promote diversity and inclusion refer to the 7 Pillars of Inclusion. These common elements contribute to creating inclusive environments that reflect the communities we live in.

They are:

- Access
- Attitude
- Choice
- Partnerships
- Communication
- Policy
- Opportunities

VICSPORT AND ACCESS FOR ALL ABILITIES WEBSITES

 www.vicsport.com.au/are-you-on-board

 www.aaavic.org.au/

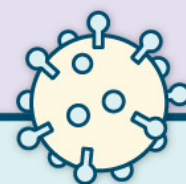


Australian Government



Disability Information Helpline

1800 643 787





Can Good Things Come from the COVID-19 Crisis?

The impact of COVID-19 has been widespread and has changed the way many things work. While we know it has been a challenging time for some people with a disability, there have also been some positive changes that have happened.

For people with a disability who have long been advocating for accommodations and accessible options, “the COVID-19 pandemic shows that these are not as impractical as we have always been told” said Ashley Shew, who is an academic with disability.

With most of the world in isolation, more people have become aware of what some of the physical barriers of what having a disability may be like. “I’m actually really optimistic good will come out of this,” says Karen Turner, a woman with disability who has been accessing her church services online.

Let’s look at some of the positive changes that have happened during COVID-19. As we start to look beyond the crisis, it will be interesting to see if some changes can remain in place and be built on for a more inclusive and accessible society.

Telehealth

- Some therapies have come online allowing people to do them from the comfort of their own home, such as speech therapy.
- Bulk billing of some items, such as some online psychology or some specialist appointments has also been welcome news.
- No travel time and being able to wait at home instead of a waiting room has been a plus for many people, also helping stop the spread of germs.
- With telehealth happening, it has many immediate advantages but “its suitability for the long term requires more thorough research”, a recent article on Croakey Health shares states.



To read more info on telehealth, visit: www.ideas.org.au
And see the blog titled ‘Telehealth’.
Or call us to receive a hard copy posted to you.



Drive through Doctors clinics & home visits from Doctors

- These measures have cut downtime in waiting rooms and exposure to germs, which have been critical for people with impaired or weakened immune systems.
- Being able to get a flu shot in your car without having to enter a Doctor's surgery has been a huge bonus for some people with physical, sensory and psychosocial disabilities.
- Others have been able to have specialist appointments or have other health needs met without leaving home.



Working from Home

With many Australians now working from home, it has exposed people to some of the advantages it can have:

- Reducing travel time, saving on travel costs, conserving bodily energy levels and increasing productivity have been some of the benefits reported by people with disabilities.
- Online meetings have become the norm, along with webinars, talks, training and conferences, making it easier for many people to attend that would typically not be able to attend physically.
- People are hopeful that accommodations can become more commonplace. "A silver lining to the crisis is that managers see that working from home doesn't have to be isolating and distracting. It can be efficient and strengthen culture" says writer and entrepreneur Geri Stengel.

NDIS Flexibility

- It was welcome news for people that funding could be used more flexibly to meet their needs.
- There has also been more straightforward access to funds to purchase assistive technology, such as an iPad to help people access their therapy or stay connected.
- See more about what the NDIS has done on page 12-13.

National Health Plan on Disability

- The Government set up a co-ordinated national plan and approach to managing the health needs of people during the COVID-19 crisis.
- With input from people with a disability, advocates, health professionals and Government it could be a positive way of working together.
- Given the poor health outcomes for many people with a disability, an ongoing national health plan could be a good step towards improving people's health.

Easier Shopping and Deliveries

- More shops came on board offering home delivery services, for groceries and essential items, with many prioritising customers with a disability.
- There was also set times that people with access needs could access shops.
- Medications and medical supplies also saw an increase in deliveries, saving many people a trip to the chemist to pick up their medication.

National Disability Helpline

- Set up in response to COVID-19 the Disability Information Helpline has been a 'one-stop-shop' for information, making it easy for people to get information as well as referrals to support such as counselling, financial help or legal advice.
- Minister for Social Services Anne Ruston has said: "We have been very pleased with the way this line has been working and the response that we have had – we are keen for it to continue." The Disability Information Helpline number is 1800 643 787.

Auslan Interpreters on the News

- The inclusion of Auslan interpreters on the news and press briefings has become a common sight on our TV screens.
- There have been calls for this to be ongoing as people with a hearing impairment always need access to information, not just in a crisis.

Flexible learning for schooling

- For some students with a disability, remote learning and online learning has proven to be popular.
- The flexibility, reduction in distractions, lack of travel time and the ability to tailor learning to individual needs have been some of the benefits people have shared with us (along with no uniforms or packing lunch boxes!).
- Parents have also said that it has been easier to work in therapy appointments around schooling, with the option of doing them during the day when their child is not as tired.

More online events and activities

- Museums and art galleries starting online tours, live-streamed concerts from around the world and online courses have all opened up.
- Religious services are being shared online, allowing people to remain part of their spiritual community.
- Many disability peer groups used the time to set up online networks.

IDEAS is aware that many of these positive changes rely on people having access to technology, plus the skills and confidence to use it. It is important that printed information still reaches people, and that free to air TV and radio messaging continues to happen. As always, the needs of people with a disability must be considered and planned for.





Winter Recipe

There's nothing like warm comforting food as the weather cools down. Whether it's a family favourite or a new recipe from a friend or a website, there are lots of choices. Taste and budget are two important factors to consider when deciding what to cook. The following recipe is on the mark for both.

Creamy Potato Bake

- 800g chat potatoes
- 50g butter
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ cup plain flour
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 1½ cups grated tasty cheese
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

Preheat oven to 200C/180C fan forced. Grease a 5cm-deep, 16.5cm x 22cm (base) roasting pan. Place potato in a large saucepan. Cover with cold water. Bring to the boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium. Simmer for 12 minutes or until just tender. Drain. Set aside for 10 minutes or until cool enough to handle. Cut into quarters.

Meanwhile, melt butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic and thyme. Cook, stirring, for 30 seconds or until fragrant. Add flour. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until bubbling. Gradually add milk, stirring constantly, until mixture is smooth and combined. Cook, stirring, for 4 to 5 minutes or until mixture boils and thickens. Add ½ cup of the cheese and the mustard. Cook, stirring, for 1 to 2 minutes or until melted and smooth. Remove from heat.

Add potato to cheese mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine. Transfer mixture to prepared pan. Top with remaining 1 cup of cheese. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes or until golden. Serve sprinkled with extra thyme.



Winter Safety with Heating Appliances

In the cooler months, hot drinks, woollen socks and an electric blanket come to mind in preparation for a good night's sleep. Warmth from a hot water bottle, heat pack or heater become the stuff of our every day lives.

No matter how you keep warm in winter, safety must come first. Various websites provide clear information on different products so they can be safely used.

Hot drinks. There's something comforting about wrapping your hands around a mug of steaming hot tea, coffee or a hot chocolate (perhaps with a marshmallow). To reduce the risk of scalds and burns, try a 'keep' cup or thermos flask with a lid that is comfortable to use.

Electric blankets. Do a check of these before using. Blankets that have frayed cords or the fabric covering the wires is worn out, need to be discarded and a new one purchased.

Hot water bottles. These can cause serious burns if not used properly. Don't ever overfill or use boiling water. Always use a fitted cover or wrap in a handtowel when using.

Heat packs. Follow the heating instructions and never use in a bed. Heat may be trapped and cause bedding to catch alight. Be extra careful of homemade ones that have no heating times as a guide.

Heaters and fireplaces. No matter how old they are, they must be checked and cleaned before use. Depending upon the type of heater consider proper venting and safety guards. Keep a minimum of 1-metre clearance from curtains, clothes and washing.

For more extensive information, visit:

 www.productsafety.gov.au/news/well-winter-safety-tips

 <https://bit.ly/stay-safe-this-winter>





Paying Your Energy Bills

Households across Australia may have access to financial assistance for their energy bills. Contact your energy supplier and your state services department to discuss the financial assistance open to you.

Energy Accounts Payment Assistance

The EAPA assessment threshold has been temporarily increased so people can receive up to \$400 per assessment twice per year, compared to the normal amount of \$300.

Seniors Energy Rebate

The Seniors Energy Rebate eases energy costs by up to \$200 a year and has been available since July last year. With many eligible seniors now confined to their homes during COVID-19 and using more power as a result, it is worth applying for now more than ever.

If you are a Commonwealth Seniors Health Cardholder who have already applied for the rebate in this financial year, you can reapply again from 1 July 2020 for the new financial year.

For more information and to apply online, go to www.service.nsw.gov.au or call Service NSW on 13 77 88.

Most energy providers will allow payment extensions and repayment instalment plans to help you pay your bills if you are experiencing financial hardship. Contact your utility provider directly to talk about your options.



This is an abbreviated version.
To see the full article visit: <https://bit.ly/paying-energy-bills>
Or call us to receive a hard copy posted to you.



Good Neighbours

Good neighbours can be priceless and in these times of isolation, being able to call on them can be so reassuring. The old cliché of dropping in to borrow a cup of sugar may elicit a giggle, but the importance of friendly, helpful neighbours can't be understated.

Here are some suggestions to help you strike up a conversation with your neighbour.

1. Introduce yourself. Soften the awkwardness with a prop such as a freshly baked cake or a basket of fruit. Let them know when bin day is or what time the mail arrives.
2. Offer to help in some way. Assist them with something whether that is grabbing a bottle of milk when you're at the shops, or mowing their nature strip when you do yours.
3. Carpool or offer them a lift to the shops. For people working it could be a social and economical step to share the drive. Some of the best conversations are those when you're driving together. For the elderly, or people with disability, time spent in a car would surely be more enjoyable than waiting for and riding in a bus or on a train. Payment may be way of morning tea following shopping.
4. Offer to mind their pets or the garden, or collect the mail when they're away.
5. Extend a dinner or BBQ invitation. A busy week at work, or a quiet and possibly lonely one with only the TV or radio for company, could be tempered by a home-cooked meal and interesting conversation.
6. One person's regular walk to the local shops for a couple of items, be that milk, bread or fruit, may be the lifeline for a neighbour's mental health and wellbeing. An invitation to come along is a great way to bond with a neighbour. Coupled with a coffee afterwards it may really strengthen the relationship and sense of trust to seek them out for more serious times or emergencies.

As the popular theme song goes, 'That's when good neighbours become good friends'.



What we consider as digital or virtual tourism began as a support to the tourist industry and tourism exposure. Used mainly in the promotion of a destination or experience, designed to engage a consumer in the planning stages and commit them to travel, but not anymore. The advent of change has brought virtual tourism to the forefront, with people at home and seeking distractions more than ever. The concept is not new, 'Armchair Travellers' have existed for centuries, through state-of-mind; absorbed in a book, in photographs, through television or other media to experience the world.

COVID-19 has become a revolution for virtual tourism. Socially restricted, with any existing travel plans on hold and the uncertainty about when holidays would be allowed again, people began to search – as a distraction, as an escape; and tourism stakeholders answered. Some already had virtual experiences in place, so they added more or diversified their offerings. Others stepped into the digital tourism world seriously for the first time.

Their strategy is to keep their destination top of mind and to secure the long-term viability of their product through the recovery of the industry. The industry went from complete crisis to the discussion of innovative ways to achieve a sustainable recovery. Virtual tourism has a central place in this discussion primarily for international or overseas travel, with borders likely to remain closed for an uncertain time. One of the benefits for People with Disability is that more significant, more immersive online content can support decision making for travel, on a higher level than ever before.

As an online traveller, you can choose the pace, the vibe and even how long you want the experience to last. From short video clips to tour-in-your-own-time experiences that take as long as you decide, there are so many options out there.

Some ways to search for your virtual experience

- By destination
- By experience – Culture, Adventure, Food, Rest or Relaxation
- By accessibility features
- By interest – eg. Family genealogy,
- By keywords – eg. Virtual Tourism Experience, Digital Tourism, Online Tourism, Armchair Travel, Virtual Travel
- By price – Free experiences or decide if you would like to pay, for example, Broadway shows.
- By platform – Webcam, Youtube, Virtual Reality
- By familiar towns that you love to visit
- From your “real” travel bucket list

If you would like to browse some examples of the types of digital travel out there, visit www.ideas.org.au and search for the blog titled ‘The New Armchair Travellers’. It discusses virtual reality in tourism and has multiple links to get you started on your next digital holiday.



**IDEAS is proud to be
by people's side
helping them through
the coronavirus crisis**

Mobility Parking Scheme Update



The Mobility Parking Scheme provides special parking conditions to eligible people with a disability. One of the key features of the Scheme is the Australian Disability Parking Permit, which replaced over 100 different types of permits across Australia. This will make travelling interstate with a Disability Parking Permit much easier. This information is relevant for NSW.

COVID-19 and online applications for permits

Due to COVID-19, the NSW State government introduced an online process for applying for, renewing and replacing a Mobility Parking Scheme permit. Attending Service NSW in person is no longer required. You may be able to apply for a 6-month temporary permit and attend Service NSW later to have your photo taken. If you had not had previous interaction with Service NSW or Transport NSW at all, you will still need to attend in person.

Types of Permits

There are three types of permits:

1. Individual (blue card). Issued for 5 years to people with a permanent disability.
2. Temporary (red card). Issued for up to 6 months to people with a temporary disability, for example, a leg injury.
3. Organisation (green card). Available only to organisations that provide transport for people with disabilities.



This is an abbreviated version.

To see the full article visit: www.ideas.org.au

And see the blog titled 'Things you need to know about Disability Parking Permits'.

Visit www.service.nsw.gov.au or call 13 77 88 to apply for a permit.



Digital Help

Recently the digital divide became more apparent than ever. During COVID-19 restrictions, the guidelines requiring people to stay at home meant that undertaking daily errands became incredibly difficult for people without digital connections and access to online services.


Recognising this, some organisations announced supports to people to connect in the digital world.

Be Connected

Be Connected is an Australia-wide initiative giving power to all Australians to thrive in a digital world. They help through online learning guides as well as a network of community partners - the Be Connected Network. They offer in-person support so you can develop your digital skills and confidence.

The Be Connected Partner map on the website has listings of community organisations in the Be Connected Network that all share a desire for digital inclusion. You can use the map to find other organisations near you that partner in the program. Do this by typing in your address or suburb in the search bar on the website and then zoom out using the plus and minus feature in the bottom right-hand corner of the map to find an organisation near you.

BE CONNECTED CONTACT DETAILS

 1300 795 897

 www.beconnected.esafety.gov.au

 **IDEAS ID: 80562**

Information sourced from Be Connected website.

Leep

Leep connect you to a skilled, patient volunteer 'Tech Mate' who guides you to access services and you to stay connected to family and friends.

Leep usually offer face-to-face digital mentoring programs, so they have adapted to offer free support via phone or video chat.

They help with:

- Device and account set up – for mobiles, laptop or personal computers
- Basic digital skills - texting, emailing and video chatting
- Accessing your doctor through telehealth
- Online shopping and banking
- Online Government Services

LEEP CONTACT DETAILS

☎ 1300 163 106

🌐 www.leep.ngo

📍 **IDEAS ID: 76614**

Information sourced from Leep website.

Stay On-Time!

Utilise your NDIS funding to help you stay on-time with important medicines and personal care tasks.



Contact TabTimer and we will help you stay on-time with Assistive Technology.
visit: www.TabTimer.com.au or call: 1300 TAB TIMER (1300 822 846)

For terms and conditions of sale see www.TabTimer.com.au. TabTimer™, 'helps keep medications on time'™, 'helping to keep people on time'™ and the TabTimer™ logo are trademarks of TabTimer Pty Ltd © 2018 ABN: 99 137 415 948

Better Access Map

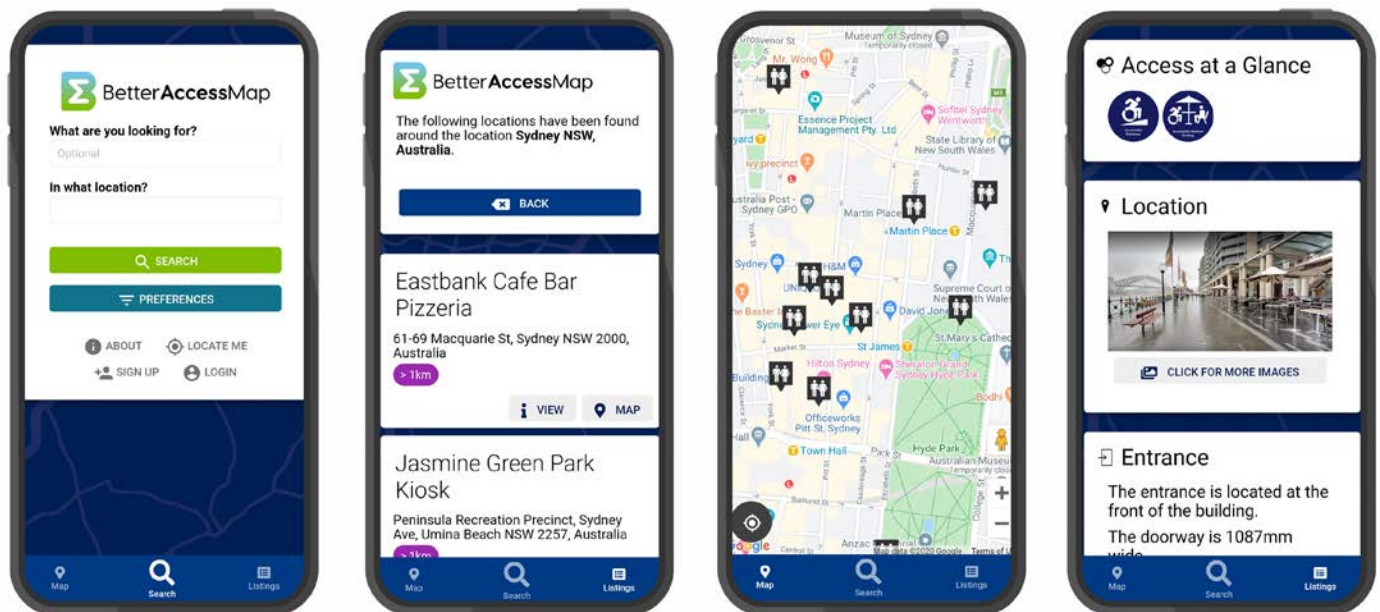
Originally set up in 2017 by a group of linkers from the St Vincent De Paul NSW Ability Links program, the Better Access Map app provides reliable accessibility information of over 100 businesses and organisations within an area stretching from the southern region of the Central Coast north to the CBD of Newcastle.

The impetus for such an app is the knowledge that having reliable information makes a huge difference to people’s lives and can “Take the guess work out of going out”.

Hundreds of Accessibility Profiles on the Better Access Map app on smartphones and the website will help people with disability, their families and friends acquire accessibility information. This will include for physical, hearing, visual and sensory needs.

The Access at a Glance preferences (symbols) are a key feature of the app. A set of 15 symbols will enable users of the app to locate places that meet their access needs. Accessible toilets, braille menus and sensory friendly spaces are some of the locations to which the symbols relate.

The Better Access Map app can be downloaded from the Apple Store, Google Play Store or accessed online.



BETTER ACCESS MAP CONTACT DETAILS

- 0439 116 712
- www.betteraccessmap.com.au
- IDEAS ID: 104243

Information sourced from Better Access Map website.

Book Review: Things We Keep

Published in 2015 this book's focus is on 38-year-old Anna who has early onset dementia. Her sharp wit and determination strengthen her resolve with her family's decision to move her to an assisted living facility called Rosalind House.

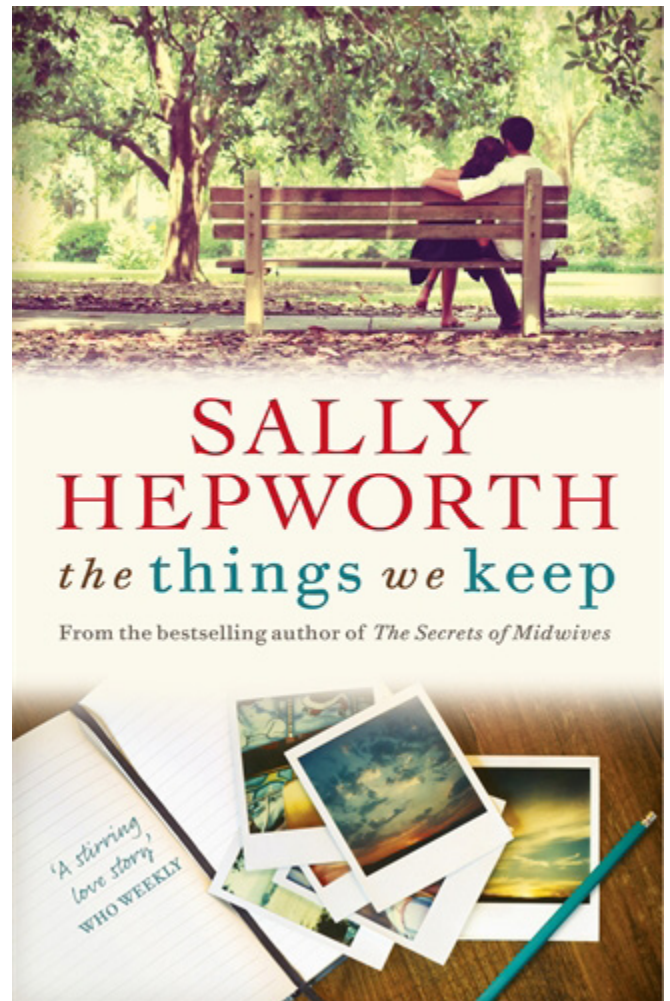
Written by Sally Hepworth, the story evolves with Anna's secret plan of not staying, however this is derailed when Anna meets Luke, the only other resident who is her age. Love blossoms between them and Anna struggles to hold on to what is familiar to her plus her relationship with Luke, as dementia creeps more intensely into her memory.

The bond forged between Luke and Anna is a source of amazement for Eve who has come to work in the kitchen at Rosalind House. She is a newly single mum with a bubbly seven-year-old daughter and has several secrets of her own.

A tragic incident leads to the families of Anna and Luke separating them, and Eve is put in the risky position of helping them. The stakes increase when her secrets and circumstances are threatened.

With even the most devastating of barriers, this story shows the power of love and its ways to grow and endure from periods of tragedy.

Humour, love and compassion all come to the fore in Things We Keep.



Things We Keep is available in paperback, ebook and audiobook formats. Visit: <https://bit.ly/things-we-keep> for more information and links to buy the book.

What's On: July - August

Month of July - Go Dry this July

Go Dry this July to raise funds for people affected by cancer.

Website: www.dryjuly.com

8-9 July - Learn Easy English: 2 day writing course

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Level 5, 50 Market St, Melbourne, VIC, 3000

Website: www.accesseasyenglish.com.au

27-29 July - Closing the Gap Indigenous Health Conference

Mercure Sydney, 818 - 820 George St, Sydney, NSW

Website: www.icsconferences.org/2020-world-health-conference

28 July - Vocational Support Networks - Sydney

50 Beach St, Kogarah, Sydney, NSW, 2217

Contact: +61 2 9036 3610 or jessica.buhne@sydney.edu.au

29 July - Vocational Support Networks - Western Sydney

Henry Parkes Equity Centre, Mimika Avenue, Whalan, Sydney

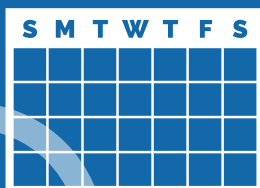
Contact: 02 9678 7371 or r.leggo@westernsydney.edu.au

17 August - Vocational Support Networks - Northern Sydney

TAFE Hornsby Library Conference Room

Level 1, A Block, 205 Peats Ferry Rd, Hornsby, Sydney, 2077

*The National NAIDOC Committee has decided to postpone NAIDOC Week 2020 (5 July - 12 July) in the interest of safety for our communities. **NAIDOC Week celebrations will now be held from the 8-15 November.***



To find more events in your area, visit the IDEAS Website and browse the **Events Calendar**

www.ideas.org.au

*The information provided in this newsletter was accurate as of **19 June 2020.***



eBility Crisis Relief



Temporary Crisis Exchange for Australians with disabilities to donate or find accessible disability equipment and non-perishable consumables. Helping people connect and share resources in times of crisis.

ebility-crisis-help.ideas.org.au

Disability Infoline
1800 029 904

Text: 0458 296 602 - LiveChat: www.ideas.org.au

Disability Information
Free, Accurate & Independent

IDEAS is a free telephone information service for people with disability, their family, carers and other supporters.

Ask us the questions, we give you the answers and you make the decisions.

IDEAS accepts selected advertisements and articles for the Newsletter of IDEAS, although this does not provide an endorsement of these actual services or products. You should always consult with a health professional before making a decision based on your individual needs. IDEAS gratefully acknowledges funding from the NDIS, the Australian Government through the Home & Community Care Program & the New South Wales Government FACS (Families and Community Services Department).