

# FRIENDS OF ABLE

Autumn/Winter 2021

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Rebecca, Able Australia client

## REBECCA SPREADS HER WINGS

This year, 23-year-old Rebecca celebrates five years attending a Day Service at Able Australia. Like many families, Rebecca and her parents were faced with the challenge of 'what next' when Rebecca graduated from her purpose built government specialist school. The options were limited. Rebecca and her parents wanted to find a service that would not just provide support but also an environment in which she would thrive – one well equipped to support individuals with multiple disabilities. On their search, they visited several Day Services.

When Rebecca came for her orientation visit to the Able Day Service in Victoria, she instantly felt at home. Rebecca walked straight in, as if she already knew the surroundings.

"We were happy to have found a place where Rebecca could meet new people and be surrounded with people her age; to safely spread her wings, to feel like her own person," said Mary, Rebecca's mum.

Having had such a positive start, the Able support team went to work, taking the time to better understand Rebecca, her needs and her goals. Today, Rebecca enjoys every interaction in the centre. She participates in the cooking experiences, music and art therapy sessions.

"Since joining Able Australia we have seen a marked improvement in Rebecca's confidence and independence," says Savva Agisilaou, Rebecca's father.

Today, Rebecca takes great pride in practising a range of daily living skills including helping set the dinner table, putting her clothes in the laundry, keeping her drink bottle in the fridge and unpacking her bag.

While Rebecca is non-verbal, she has learned how to express herself and can communicate her wishes through non-verbal expression.

"What we like about Able is it's not one size fits all," says Mary. "There is a lot of tailored support and a big focus on development. They are always looking at new activities and opportunities to grow and stimulate Rebecca. My husband and I feel we have a great partnership with them in meeting our daughter's needs."

TOGETHER WE ARE ABLE



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



On behalf of everyone at Able, I thank you for supporting our initiatives and for making the Christmas 2020 extra special for our clients. Because of you we were able to surprise our clients with presents. We hope you enjoy some of the pictures taken of our clients enjoying their gifts included in this newsletter.

At the end of the year, we also held our 2020 Able Art exhibition.

While we weren't able to hold a physical exhibition, we were still able to celebrate and admire the wonderful original pieces created by our clients, online.

One advantage of having an online exhibition is that, for the first time, we also included our Tasmanian clients. We're so pleased to have the opportunity to expand this program beyond our Victorian shores. Our hope is that we can do it again this year.

In this newsletter we also share with you, some good news stories about how we are striving to deliver better days for our clients Rebecca, Joanne and Aaron. These stories demonstrate that it's as much about the big things and little things that make every day a better day for our clients.

We value your commitment to helping people with disability live the life they choose. Your generous donations help us to continue to

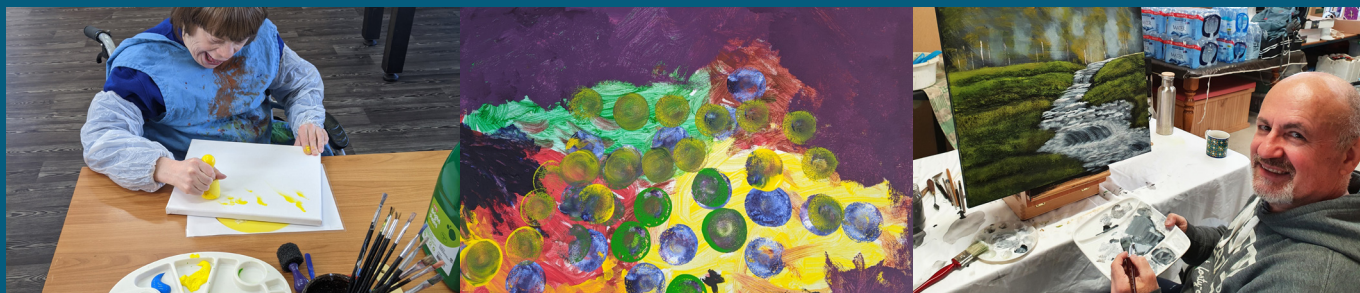
deliver high quality supported independent living homes and day services inclusive and accessible to the people we support.

In 2020, we faced bushfires, floods and a pandemic. The challenges these created for our clients and workforce were considerable. Nevertheless, your support helped us meet these challenges and allowed us to continue delivering our essential services to those in need. I cannot begin to thank you enough for your support.

While it may be a new year, the pandemic continues to impact us all in different ways. If nothing else, last year taught us that by supporting each other, we'll get through this - together we are able.

**Kate MacRae, CEO**  
Able Australia

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads 'K MacRae'.



## COVID UPDATE

Whilst COVID-19 continues to influence how we operate, we will continue to deliver our high-quality services to the people we support.

Recently, the Australian Government announced that, people living with disability in residential settings and their workers would be among the first to be given access to a COVID-19 vaccination which

commenced on 22 February 2021. Being prioritised in this way reflects the importance of protecting those who are most vulnerable to COVID. While the vaccine will not be mandatory, we hope that many will take this opportunity in order to protect themselves, their clients, their families and the broader community.

If you are interested to know more about how we are supporting our clients and workforce through the vaccination rollout, visit the COVID-19 vaccine page on our website:

**[www.ableaustralia.org.au/covid-19-vaccine](http://www.ableaustralia.org.au/covid-19-vaccine)**



# GETTING THE MOST OUT OF LIFE

We want our clients to live their best life and have every opportunity to do just that – whether it is to try a new hobby, play sport, take a class or hang out with friends. At Able our aim is to support our clients to engage in a broad range of activities.



## Jordan

**Jordan attends a weekly dance class as part of Able Australia's Lifestyle Choices Program in Tasmania.**

"I like the instructor. Her name is Chaise, and she says I'm amazing at Limba. I like the music. My fitness is getting better, and it's a great workout. My goal is to lose 10 kilograms, and I reckon this is helping with that. The youngest person who goes is 27, and the oldest is 85! I'm not sure how many people go each week, but the hall is always full!" - Jordan



## Aaron

**Aaron attends a Day Service in Tasmania and had set a goal for himself about helping others.**

"During a recent visit to an animal farm, in Hobart, Aaron was helping the farm owner to get the feed out. Aaron loves to be helpful. That is how he connects with people. Aaron had been to the farm once before this visit, so he was excited to show me, Jasper, the dog, they walked around together, and Aaron loved giving him treats," - Maria Thomas, Disability Support Worker, Able Australia Tasmania.



## Joe Anne

**Joanne attends a Lifestyle Choices Program in Tasmania and enjoys cooking.**

"During the week, my support worker and I did some cooking in my home and made little mini quiches using the eggs from the farm." - Joanne



## Dianne

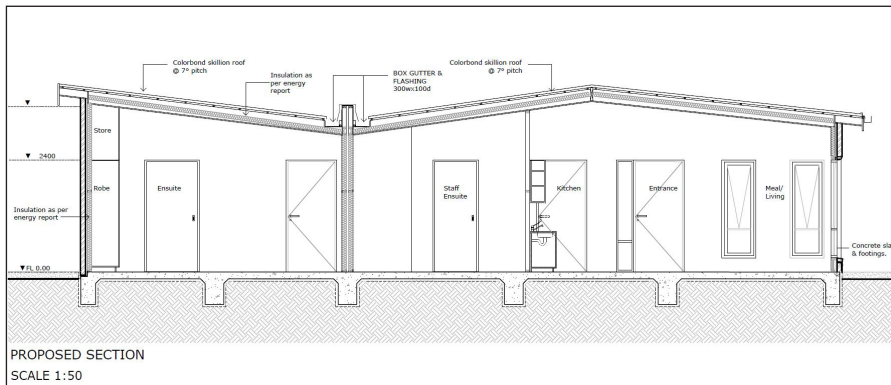
**Dianne is a woman who receives supports from our Lifestyle Choices team five days per week.**

Prior to the Covid Pandemic, Dianne would spend a lot of her time in our Centre in Moonah. Dianne enjoyed her routine of seeing her friends every day and spent a lot of her time doing puzzles, scrapbooking and having her nails done. Dianne has complex needs relating to sensory stimulation

and predictable routines and as such. Dianne has multiple chronic health conditions which places her at a high risk to Covid. Which means that, since the beginning of the pandemic, nearly 12 months ago, she has been unable to come in to the centre or to access the Community much at all. Recently, Dianne went on an excursion to an Animal Therapy program in the country with some of her friends. This made her very happy. Dianne

For many of our clients government funding does not cover the cost of enrolment in activities such as dance classes, visits to animal farms or art therapy. Our clients enjoy these experiences and we rely on the generosity of donors like you to provide our clients the opportunity to enjoy the best that life can offer.

# ACCESSIBLE HOMES & INCLUSIVE LIVING UPDATE



At Able, we believe in the importance of accessible living as an integral part of enhancing independence. We are excited about the three redevelopment projects that we have in the pipeline. These are projects that have been made possible, thanks to our incredible donors.

In late-2019 and mid-2020, we reached out to you with a request of raising \$600,000 to build two-

single unit homes in Moorabbin and to renovate the kitchen and bathroom in Springvale.

You will be pleased to know that, in November 2020, the Department of Health Services offered Able finance to renovate the kitchen and bathroom in Able's Springvale home. They have committed to creating an accessible kitchen and bathroom for our residents, which will enable us to achieve our goal of accessible living. This has also meant we only need to fund the Moorabbin build – a \$525,000 project.

Thanks to generous donations from supporters like you, we raised an astounding \$313,000 towards these dream projects in December 2019 and June 2020. The balance of this project, \$212,000 will be financed by Able Australia.

We would love the opportunity to show you the improvements we are making in the disability sector whilst focusing on the needs of the community at large. As we continue our journey, we extend our heartfelt thanks to you for being an integral part of our community.

## FESTIVE DELIGHT

I'm sure you understand the simple joy a present can bring to one. Our support workers spent the last Christmas shopping for presents for our clients. This was possible only because of contributions from supporters like you.

We are grateful to you for making the 2020 festive season extra special with thoughtful presents for the people we support. Thank you for supporting us and bringing so many smiles to our clients faces.



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