

Impact Report

Together, we're helping to support people with complex disabilities



Chloe enjoyed teaching Ned, the therapy dog, new tricks!

Building confidence, one skill at a time

Young adults supported by Able Australia are gaining vital life skills and experiencing opportunities that were once beyond their reach.

Our Health and Wellbeing Program encourages these young people to take charge of their health, build resilience, and develop confidence for independent living. Through activities like cooking, swimming, fitness sessions, and self-advocacy workshops, clients are learning how to care for their bodies and minds in practical, lasting ways.

For many, this year has been full of firsts. Some ventured to the snow for the very first time. Others learned how to swim, an incredible achievement for those living with complex needs. All participants had

the chance to learn how to cook healthy versions of their favourite meals, building confidence in the kitchen and healthy habits for life.

The feedback from our young adults has been heartwarming; they've loved every minute of it. Many said these experiences simply wouldn't have been possible without the support of programs like this.



"I like going for a toboggan!" - Jack



Josh loved the cooking lessons



"I like learning self-defence!" - Laura



This life-changing program was made possible by philanthropic support, including a generous gift from the Brian M. Davis Charitable Foundation.



To see the joy and determination of our clients during one of their workout sessions, simply scan this QR code to watch a short video.

Positive life changes for children with disability

Our Respite Options program for children aged 5-12 has plenty of age-appropriate activities on offer for developing young children like Emily. The teens program for 13-17 year olds focuses on developing independence as teenagers head towards adulthood. Both programs support vulnerable young people to build skills and confidence away from home in a safe and encouraging setting, build new friendships, enjoy the opportunity to share interests, learn new skills, and have fun!



Emily

This recent letter was from a family using Respite Options:

“It’s the first place the boys felt comfortable, and their needs were understood and met. This positively changed the boys’ and our lives as their carers.

They got to spend time with peers who shared their interests and understood each other’s differences.

Your service always went out of its way to get the boys to set out and be in charge of choosing activities for their weekend stays.

They were provided with excellent care and helped to meet and learn life skills while using your service.”

- Respite Options Family



Lifeskills and FUN in Supported Independent Living (SIL)

Our team of passionate and dedicated support workers are committed to supporting clients with disability to achieve their goals and thrive in the comfort of their home.

We provide support and help build lifeskills such as:

- ✓ Going to appointments and any follow-ups
- ✓ Filling out forms and communicating
- ✓ Taking care of the house including shopping, cleaning, cooking and organising
- ✓ Using public transport



Julie with Able Staff

Your donations help fund important social activities for our clients with disability, like getting out into the community, making friends, doing fun activities such as bowling, going to the movies and exercising.

Nothing brings people together like homemade lasagna!

- ▶ Julie lives in an Able SIL home. Along with her roommate and Able Australia staff, Harriet and Manisha, she had a blast cooking lasagna for the first time!

Able Family Sports Day – Different is great!

Australian basketball Paralympian, Leanne Del Toso, was an inspirational guest at our Family Sports Day at Able's Day Service program. Leanne motivated Able's 55 Day Service clients, their families and staff:

"The only person who really knows what you can do is you! I want to challenge everyone here today – that if it looks different, you do it a different way, it does not matter. Every day I try really hard to have a really great day and I challenge myself to do something a little bit different. And I think different is great!"

- Leanne Del Toso



Leanne brought her silver medal and encouraged clients and staff to try it on. Many were surprised at how heavy it was and thrilled that it features braille! Leanne challenged clients to a basketball shoot-out and gave them signed basketballs.

Everyone loved playing a range of sports and sharing a BBQ together.

Donations, including a generous grant from the Smartgroup Foundation, funded this fun event that fostered teamwork, laughter, and a real sense of belonging, demonstrating how thoughtful community events can bring everyone together!

Day on the Bay

Held during Deafblind Awareness Week, this annual event has truly become a standout highlight on the deafblind community calendar.

Deafblind clients had an incredible day at the Beaumaris Squadron Yacht Club feeling the bumps across the water as the boats glide out on the open water and the pure joy of cruising in everything from classic Minis to a sleek 102 year old Rolls Royce.

Here's to community, connection, and the kind of moments that stay with you forever. Until next year!



New research from Able's Centre of Excellence - Deafblind

Deafblindness is a combination of sight and hearing loss, which impacts a person's ability to communicate, access information and participate equally in society.

Deafblindness is much more common than people realise, and as we age, it is likely that more of us will require deafblind-aware services.

We are proud of the work led by Able Australia's Head of Research, Dr Meredith Prain, in partnership with members of our Deafblind reference group and their partners. Research plays a vital role in raising awareness, improving support, and driving positive change.



New research from Able Australia's Centre of Excellence - Deafblind is shedding light on the real-life challenges families face after early Usher syndrome diagnosis. Usher syndrome accounts for approximately half of all cases of hereditary deafblindness.

That is — the cause of deafblindness from birth.

The research explores the challenges faced by families of children with Usher syndrome, especially as improved genetic testing leads to earlier diagnoses — a life-changing shift that brings both opportunities and new questions.

This is an important step forward in better understanding and supporting the deafblind community.

The Centre of Excellence — Deafblind aims to make life better for people with deafblindness in all areas such as communication, access to good quality services, housing, education, employment, technology and health. Through research, consultancy, training, information and advocacy, we work together with people with deafblindness and their social and support networks, service providers, advocacy groups, universities and Government agencies.

The wide array of key achievements in the last 12 months include:

- ✓ Completion of Deafblind Technology project, evaluating outcomes of introduction of technologies for Victorians with deafblindness
- ✓ Completion of development of a World Health Organisation ICF Core Set for deafblindness
- ✓ Two Communication Guide training programs run to develop knowledge and skills in working with people with deafblindness
- ✓ Two Video Interaction Guidance Initial Training Courses delivered to identify and improve on communication strengths
- ✓ Presentation at the South Pacific Educators of the Vision Impaired Conference
- ✓ Development of a course for Auslan interpreters to build competency in deafblind interpreting
- ✓ Recognition by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) that deafblind interpreting is a specialist skill
- ✓ Publication of 7 peer-reviewed journal articles
- ✓ Development of an online Deafblind Introductory Training Course

Able Australia at a Glance

Young clients with disability supported:

20 young children in Community Access and Respite Options programs



6 teenagers supported 24 hours in Supported Independent Living homes



49 teenagers in Community Access and Respite Options programs



Adults with complex disabilities supported:

31 young adults (19-25 yrs) in Day Services, Community Access and Respite Options programs



9 young adults (19-25 yrs) supported 24 hours in Supported Independent Living homes (SIL)



258 adults (26-85 yrs) in Day Services, Community Access, SIL and Respite Options programs



66 Deafblind Services clients



2 Research projects completed and **7 articles published** - Centre of Excellence for Deafblind



20+ New excursions to zoos, museums, the snow, city explore and boat tours, funded by grants and donations



Support our clients with disability



A gift that will last a lifetime

Many people like you, who passionately support Able Australia, consider providing a donation or leaving a gift in their Will that funds many of our life-transforming projects.

Leaving a legacy to Able Australia in your Will is a very special way of giving a gift that keeps giving. A gift in your Will — no matter how big or small — ensures that Able Australia will continue to support and empower people living with complex disabilities.

We're excited to partner with Gathered Here to make legacy giving as easy as

possible for our supporters. **Wills written on Gathered Here are completely free of charge and include free updates for life.**

It'll only take around 10 minutes, and no matter how many times you change your mind, you can change your will too.

Able Australia supporters, and your families can write a Will for free just using the QR code below, or visit

ableaustralia.org.au/gift-in-will



For Bequest information, please contact Rose Livingston on 1300 220 602 or email fundraising@ableaustralia.org.au



Join Able:Community (monthly donation program)

Join Able:Community, to empower and enable people living with complex disabilities in Australia to achieve their life goals.

Each month, your investment will drive initiatives including:

- Giving young people a memorable experience like horse riding, art or swimming lessons.
- Supplying deafblind people with the assistive technology and supports they need for communication and everyday activities.

- Supporting Able's Centre of Excellence — Deafblind in training, advocacy and deafblind research for all ages.

Giving monthly helps Able Australia plan future programs, offers you behind the scenes exclusive updates and gives continued support to people with disability. Phone Jess or Rose in our Donor Care Team on **1300 220 602** or set up a recurring gift on donate.ableaustralia.org.au/

Thank you for being a part of creating special opportunities for the people we support.

Please contact our Donor Care Team to let us know what you thought about our Impact Report and tell us what you'd like to hear more about in the future:

Phone **1300 220 602** or email fundraising@ableaustralia.org.au.

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