



Impact Report

Here's What Your Support Makes Possible.

Deafblind Camp 2026: Connection, Confidence and Community

Forty deafblind campers from across Australia came together for Deafblind Camp 2026. Alongside Communication Guides, Auslan interpreters, volunteers and Able Australia employees, they shared three unforgettable days filled with friendship, learning, laughter and new experiences.

What made this year's camp especially significant was that it was led by the deafblind community, for the deafblind community. After attending Able Australia's Deafblind Camps for more than 15 years, Alex became our first Camp Coordinator who is deafblind.



Working alongside four deafblind committee members, Alex helped design and lead the camp, choosing activities they knew campers would enjoy and ensuring every aspect of camp was accessible and inclusive. Reflecting on the experience, Alex said:

"Being Camp Coordinator showed me how powerful it is when deafblind people lead the way. Campers told me they felt more connected than ever before."

Accessibility was built into every activity, ensuring campers could communicate and fully participate. This included Auslan, tactile sign, deafblind fingerspelling, visual frame signing, Braille, large print and providing Able's trained Communication Guides.

For camper Melinda, that made all the difference:

"Everybody was so understanding of people who can't hear or can't see. You're just there and having fun."

The program was packed with engaging and accessible activities. Campers explored orientation and mobility, created tactile maps, took part in wellbeing sessions, experienced horticulture through touch and smell, and met a range of reptiles. There was also plenty of fun!

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One highlight was the Stars and Idols disco. Campers could experience music through wearable haptic vests to feel vibrations across their bodies, helping them connect with the rhythm, bass and melody. The dance floor quickly filled with energy, confidence and joy as campers performed on stage, dressed up in creative costumes and cheered each other on.

For many campers, however, the most important part of camp was not a particular activity. It was the feeling of connection.

Your support helps make opportunities like this possible. Because of your generosity, people who are deafblind can build friendships, develop confidence, try new experiences and take on leadership roles. Leaders like Alex can share their skills, shape programs and inspire others to see what is possible.

This life-changing camp was made possible with philanthropic support, including generous gifts

As Deafblind Camp Committee Member Jasper explained: ***“Connection to people with shared experiences and values is really important in some way to all of us.”***



from the Lionel & Yvonne Spencer Trust and the Olver-Carlyle Charitable Foundation. Supporters like you also help fund the dedicated staff who ensure campers can participate safely, confidently and fully.

Watch the video from Deafblind Camp 2026 to see your impact in action.



Little Gifts, Big Smiles

Thanks to supporters of last year's Christmas Appeal, children and teenagers in Able Australia's Respite Services have enjoyed new ways to play, connect and build confidence in a safe and supportive environment.

Your generosity helped purchase two new bikes with helmets, Lego and Duplo blocks, Barbies, soft toys, books, sensory toys with different textures, Hot Wheels cars, puzzles, slime-making kits, play dough, soccer balls and footballs, dance mats, a car mat, a basketball hoop and board games.

For children like Cody and Emily, who have featured in this year's appeals, these items are more than toys. They create opportunities to practise sharing and turn-taking, explore movement and sensory play, develop imagination, and enjoy time with other children.

Because of your support, children like Cody and Emily are riding bikes, building friendships,

developing confidence and discovering new ways to play. Respite Services gives children aged 5 to 12, and teenagers aged 13 to 17, the chance to spend time away from home, try new activities and form friendships while families receive a much-needed break. With the right supports in place, young people can feel safe, included and encouraged to be themselves.



Emily's Mum Mikki says,

“Respite gives Emily a chance to make friends and try new things while I know she's safe and supported.”

Because of supporters like you, children in Respite Services are experiencing joy, connection and confidence through play.

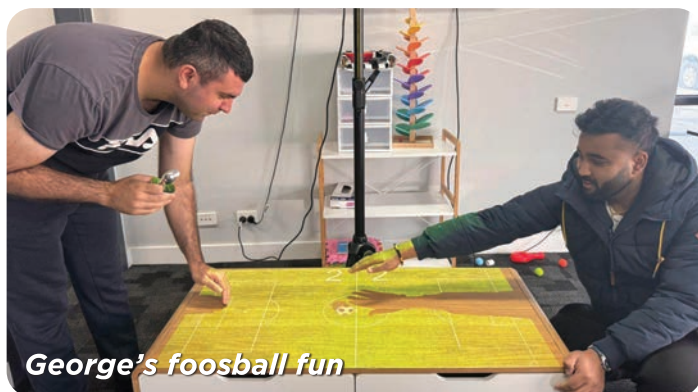
Lighting Up Possibility with Omi Budii

George leans over the foosball table, completely absorbed in the game as his support worker cheers him on. Lynette relaxes into the soft glow of projected colours, creating art on the wall with confidence and ease.

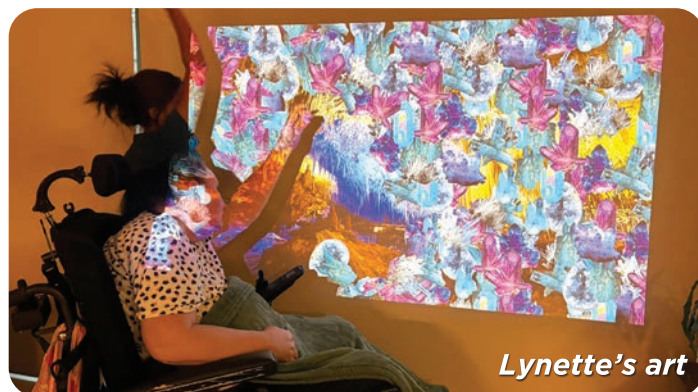
These moments capture something powerful. The joy, connection and freedom that the new Omi Budii interactive projector is bringing to the people Able Australia supports. For

individuals with complex disabilities, traditional activities can sometimes feel out of reach. Omi Budii changes that by opening up playful, sensory-rich experiences that invite exploration, creativity and meaningful engagement.

This technology is a doorway to inclusion. Thank you to the Des Cooper Foundation and all of our supporters for helping us provide life-changing assistive technology.



George's foosball fun



Lynette's art

Life Skills Development

Able's Shop, Learn and Cook program focuses on developing everyday life skills.

Clients built confidence using public transport and shopping for ingredients and they learned practical budgeting skills. They prepare a meal, eat, clean up and move on to another activity later in the day. Kelly learned new skills in mixing and measuring, and is interested in learning more about cooking healthy meals.

This program promotes healthy lifestyles, confidence, independence, and practical skills that can be transferred to everyday life.



Kelly cooking

Culture Club Kicks a Goal

Our Culture Club celebrated the FIFA World Cup with a day of sunshine, soccer, friendly competition and a shared BBQ. Clients joined in outdoor games, indoor foosball and plenty of cheering from the sidelines. More than a sporting event, it was a chance to bring people together, celebrate different cultures and create a sense of belonging.

Through Culture Club, people explore new traditions, share experiences and learn from staff who bring their own cultural backgrounds to the program, helping build inclusion, understanding and connection.

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



World Cup!

New research from Able's Centre of Excellence - Deafblind

For people with deafblindness, everyday tasks like accessing information, communicating with others and travelling safely can be significant challenges. Through research, training and community education, Able Australia's Centre of Excellence - Deafblind is helping create a more inclusive and accessible Australia. Led by Dr Meredith Prain, research is helping identify practical solutions to improve safety, independence and participation for people with deafblindness.

Improving safety and independence

Research conducted across Australia identified orientation and mobility as one of the most significant challenges experienced by people with deafblindness. Supported by the National Disability Research Partnership, Able Australia worked with people with deafblindness to identify research priorities for work to address mobility safety concerns.

DB-SAFE (Deafblind - Safer Access for Everyone) project focuses on mobility safety of people with deafblindness, supported by the Transport Accident Commission and the Department of Transport and Planning.

Four workshops were delivered for 20 people with deafblindness and two workshops for 40 Communication Guides, with a focus on travelling more safely and confidently in the community. Developed in response to priorities identified by participants, the workshops were facilitated by Orientation and Mobility Specialist Clare O'Sullivan. Participants explored safe travel strategies, building confidence when moving through their communities, accessing support services, and reporting hazards and obstacles. The workshops reflect our ongoing commitment to creating safer and more accessible public spaces.



Building knowledge and skills

Many professionals, families and community members want to better support people with deafblindness but do not know where to start. Our practical training programs help build the confidence and skills needed to communicate effectively and provide meaningful support. Recognising that not everyone can attend in person, we have also expanded our online learning options through Deafblind Information Australia, a project funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. These resources help make trusted information and training accessible to more people across Australia.

Key achievements this year include:

- Delivery of DB-SAFE road safety workshops.
- National research exploring mobility safety.
- Continued delivery of face-to-face deafblindness training across Australia.
- Delivery of Video Interaction Guidance Initial Training Course.
- Expansion of online learning through Deafblind Information Australia.
- Ongoing research, advocacy & community engagement led by Centre of Excellence - Deafblind.
- Publication of peer-reviewed research and presentations at national and international conferences.

Together, these initiatives are helping people with deafblindness build confidence, travel more safely, access information and participate more fully in everyday life.

Able Australia at a Glance

Thanks to supporters like you, Able Australia delivered life-changing support to people with complex disabilities across Australia this year.

Young clients with disabilities:



12

young children in Community Access and Respite programs



4

teenagers supported 24 hours in Supported Independent Living homes (SIL)



29

teenagers in Community Access and Respite programs

Adults with complex disabilities supported:



42

young adults (20-25 yrs) in Day Services, Community Access and Respite programs



11

young adults (20-25 yrs) supported 24 hours in Supported Independent Living homes (SIL)



377

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



66

Deafblind Services clients



2

Research projects completed and **8 articles published** and **1 book chapter published** by Centre of Excellence for Deafblind

Our Strategic Plan

We are proud of Able Australia's reputation as a trusted service provider. Over the next three years, we will strengthen how people experience our services by focusing on three key priorities to create **Better Days, Every Day**, now and into the future, with and for the people we support.

Read
**Able Australia's
Strategic Plan**



A gift that will last a lifetime

Beverley was a loyal Able Australia supporter, a generous donor and a woman who quietly made a difference throughout her life.

Profoundly deaf from a young age, Beverley understood the challenges that people with disability can face. Her own experiences shaped a deep compassion for others and inspired her lifelong support of organisations that improve lives.

Born in Melbourne in 1938, Beverley was known by family and friends as thoughtful, independent and kind. She lived simply and believed strongly in helping others whenever she could. Even when her own finances became limited, her generosity never wavered.

When Beverley passed away in August 2025 at the age of 87, her final act of kindness reflected a lifetime of giving. Through her Will, she chose to leave her estate to nine charities supporting both people and animals. Able Australia was honoured to be among them.

Her gift will help ensure people with complex disabilities continue to access support, connection and opportunities long into the future.

We thank Beverley for her kindness, her loyalty and the lasting impact she will have on the people we support.



Leave a Legacy of Possibility

Many people like you, who passionately support Able Australia, choose to leave a gift in their Will to help fund life-changing programs and services. A gift in your Will, no matter the size, can help ensure future generations of people with complex disabilities have access to opportunities, support and connection.

We've partnered with EveryWill to make writing a Will simple and accessible. Able Australia supporters and their families can create a Will free of charge, with free updates for life.

To learn more about leaving a gift in your Will, visit ableaustralia.org.au/gift-in-will or contact **Rose Livingston** on **1300 220 602** or email fundraising@ableaustralia.org.au



**Make your free
online Will**

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

ableaustralia.org.au

