

# Pave the Way Newsletter

September 2009

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".....it is our vision and planning that will help create our own inspiring story."

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## "What do other families do?"

This question is one we often hear at Pave the Way workshops or in conversation with families who are trying to work out how to translate the hopes and dreams they have for their family member into practical plans. It is a reasonable question. We can all be inspired by the lives and example of others, so reading or hearing stories about what other families are doing can be helpful in pushing the boundaries of our thinking or finding out practical hints and suggestions that will help turn our dreams into reality.

The important thing about stories, however, is to distinguish between the theme and the content; between the message underlying the story and the details of what actually happened. Sometimes it is the content that is valuable. In an article on the Pave the Way website, for example, one family tells the story of their son successfully moving from school into a mail delivery business. Reading about how the business was started, how the son's support was organised could be of great practical value for a family thinking of a similar project. However, starting a business may not be feasible for every young person finishing school and yet, stories such as this one, are still important because of the theme or message underlying the content. In this case, the important message is not the starting of a business but that people around this young man had a clear idea of the kind of life he could and should lead then worked to make this happen.

Janet Klees from the Deohaeko community in Canada expressed this same idea in the foreword to a book describing how families organised a place for their sons and daughters to live ordinary lives in that community. It is a story that is often told and one that appeals to a lot of families who would like to create something similar for their sons and daughters. Janet writes, however, "...this story is not a recipe for success....it is simply a description of the journey of one group of people beginning to achieve some of their dreams and share their common vision." (Klees, Janet (1996) *We come bearing gifts*. Pickering, Ontario)

Whether it is the theme or content of someone's story that is useful or inspiring at any one time, it is our vision and planning that will help create our own inspiring story.

For further information on this article, please contact Pave the Way on (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402 or by email [pavetheway@mamre.org.au](mailto:pavetheway@mamre.org.au)

## What do other families do? – Resources

Pave the Way offers opportunities for families in Queensland to share with others their ideas and strategies for planning and creating good lives for their family members. These opportunities include the 2 day and 6 day live-in workshops, the series of Rolling Conversations and, more recently, the Family Conversations. We hope to expand these opportunities for families through a variety of different events in 2010. Dates of upcoming workshops and other events are included in our newsletters and on the workshop calendar which can be found at [www.pavetheway.org.au/home/workshop-calendar.php](http://www.pavetheway.org.au/home/workshop-calendar.php).

The resources page of our website includes stories by Queensland families, articles that are often based on family stories and links to websites including the following:

<http://www.cru.org.au/crutimes/index.htm>

Community Resource Unit (CRU) based in Brisbane publishes CRUcial Times. Each issue includes articles with insights and inspirations for those wanting to make a difference in the lives of people who have a disability. Writers include people with disabilities, parents, service providers, social commentators and ordinary members of the community. Also includes information about workshops and conferences that families have found helpful.

<http://www.family-advocacy.com>

Family Advocacy is an independent community advocacy organisation based in New South Wales. The website includes an online journal, free to families.

<http://www.supportedliving.org.au>

New South Wales website dedicated to information about supported living for people with disabilities. It includes resources, articles and stories of how people with disabilities and their families have organised the support they need to live in their own homes.

<http://www.homeswest.org.au>

Homes West is a small community based service in Brisbane which supports individuals to establish and to live in homes of their own and to be included as active and valued members in their local community. The website includes articles about the history of the organisation and how it works.

**These international websites also include useful stories and articles.**

<http://www.in-control.org.uk>

Incontrol. UK website that promotes people being in control of their own supports.

<http://www.communityworks.info/index.htm>

Community Works, Canada. Articles about what it takes for a person with a disability to live a good life in the community.

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“The reality is that the full and positive lives of people with disabilities that we hear and read about do not happen by accident. These inspirational stories can be told because someone had a vision and belief in what is possible, sometimes against considerable opposition, and planned to make it happen.”

**(Jeremy Ward)**

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## Pave the Way Reference Group Update

Pave the Way is delighted to welcome Jenni Pidgeon to our Reference Group. Jenni comes from Clermont in Central Queensland and has two adult sons. She has been involved in advocating for a good life for people with disabilities and their families for over 20 years, particularly in relation to what happens for young people with disability when they leave school.

As we welcome a new member to the Reference Group, it is perhaps timely to explain a little about the Group and to introduce the other members. Pave the Way is part of Mamre Association, a family support organisation with a long history of working with people with disability and their families in the Brisbane region. Pave the Way has an historical and ongoing relationship with Mamre and shares a common value base in its work with families. While we are accountable to the Mamre Governance Board we work with a separate Reference Group, partly in recognition of the fact that Pave the Way differs considerably from Mamre in both the nature and geographical spread of our work. Unlike Mamre, Pave the Way works throughout Queensland and is not involved in direct family support.

The Reference Group is an advisory body. It plays a valuable role in assisting staff to reflect on our work as we evaluate what we are doing now and set new directions for the future. All members have a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the work of Pave the Way. Some of the current members were part of the original reference group set up to guide the development of the project that ultimately became Pave the Way.

The group meets with the Pave the Way team four times a year. It consists of diverse members including people who have a family member with a disability and those with a particular interest and expertise in working with people with disabilities and their families. Importantly, the composition of the group reflects the commitment of Pave the Way to working effectively with families in regional areas of Queensland. In the current Reference Group there are four members from outside Brisbane, all of whom have family members with a disability: Sue Tuttle (Innisfail), Connie Young (Mackay), Josey McMahon (Gold Coast) and Jenni Pidgeon (Clermont). The Brisbane members are: Greg Buckley and Leanne Burke who are also family members; Kathryn Treston, Director of Mamre Association; Margaret Rodgers, Director of Community Resource Unit and Kevin Cocks, Chairperson of Queensland Advocacy Incorporated. We acknowledge the valuable support of this group and look forward to welcoming Jenni to her work with them and with the staff of Pave the Way.

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“...the composition of the group reflects the commitment of Pave the Way to working effectively with families in regional areas of Queensland.”

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## 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.

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## Upcoming Events

### Planning for Now, Tomorrow and the Future

Mt Gravatt 10 September 2009 (PTW)  
Roma 9 October 2009 (Spiritus)

### From Visions to Actions Through Planning – (Six day live-in)

Coolum 13 - 15 Nov 2009 & 26 - 28 Feb 2010 (PTW)

### Building Lifelong Supports & Safeguards

Townsville Early November – date T.B.A (PTW)  
Bundaberg November – date T.B.A (PTW)  
Brisbane Early December – date T.B.A (PTW)

## Regional Visits

### Julie van Oosten

Bundaberg 31 Aug 09  
Rockhampton 1 – 2 Sept 09  
Goondiwindi 7 – 9 Sept 09

### Sharon Bourke

Cairns 1 – 4 Oct 09  
Mackay 5 – 6 Oct 09  
Cairns Early December



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To book into a workshop, please phone the relevant contact. For Pave the Way (PTW) phone (07) 3291 5800 and for Spiritus phone 4620 4000. For regional visits please contact Julie van Oosten or Sharon Bourke on (07) 3291 5800 or 1300 554 402. You can also view the workshop and events calendar online at [www.pavetheway.org.au/home/workshop-calendar.php](http://www.pavetheway.org.au/home/workshop-calendar.php).