

Watch this space...

FSGA is always engaged in the process of exploring new opportunities and seeking to improve our existing services. The following initiatives will be featured in more detail in future newsletters.

FSGA has received funding to develop a new mental health program - our first ever Sunshine Coast based program!

Funds were recently received for a Consumer Operated Service that will assist people living with a mental illness to develop personal wellness strategies within a recovery framework, supported by trained peer workers. We have called the model PEARL (Peer Engaged Assisted Recovery Lifestyles) This unique funded model is a Queensland first and a natural expansion of the recovery philosophy and practices already established through FSGA's enVision Mental Health services in the Brisbane, Ipswich and Gold Coast areas.

Skill, Training and Employment Partnership (STEP) Program stretches its wings

Due to the ever increasing popularity and great individual outcomes arising from the STEP program, participants will soon have even more opportunities (in more locations) to learn, experience choice and move forward positively in life. Lakeview and Garden St Southport venues are joining forces to broaden the scope of experiences and streamline with other programs to ensure people are supported to take the next 'step' into the future. See our next edition for more!

The Deck - community café under construction

By our next edition we hope you have had your first cappuccino at The Deck. Recent fund-raising and donations have seen the dream begin to take shape and a deck is indeed appearing at the back of the Encompass Resource Centre Labrador. It seems fitting that at the site of our oldest service (the original Orana Children's' Respite Centre) there is a brand new and inclusive initiative emerging from the sawdust. For more about The Deck's progress please see our website and watch this space!

FSG AUSTRALIA INFO LINE

Offering assistance with:

- general information about FSG Australia
- enquiries about FSG Australia programs, centres and services
- information about and supported referral to other available services in the region
- information about specific disabilities, access issues etc
- practical advice for carers
- complaints or grievances
- ideas and suggestions for changes or improvements
- passing on positive feedback

If you need any information at all and you think FSG Australia might be able to help, send us an email!

info@fsg.org.au or visit our website www.fsg.org.au

We especially welcome people with a disability, carers and family members, to use helpline. It is also open to anyone in the community who would like to know more about disability, mental health and aged care, and people who may have an interest in employment or volunteering with FSG Australia.



WHAT'S NEW AT FSGA?

MAY

Successful development and launch of a DVD to target hidden carers and provide a single point of contact for respite services. The DVD was a result of feedback from a forum of multiple services funded under the National Respite Carers Program (NRCP). FSGA received funding to facilitate the forum designed to build capacity of respite services in the Brisbane South, West Moreton and South Coast Regions.

JUNE

FSGA has accepted the generous donation of 2 specialised beach wheelchairs (adults and children) from the Robina Lions Club. The chairs will be well used across many FSGA programs and much fun is anticipated as we head out of winter and onto our great Gold Coast beaches!



FSG Australia
Head Office
16 Railway Street, Southport Qld 4215
PO Box 2597, Southport Qld 4215
Telephone (07) 5564 0655
Facsimile (07) 5564 0070
www.fsg.org.au



FSG in your community

Always making a positive difference in people's lives

GOLD COAST - BEENLEIGH - BRISBANE SOUTH - IPSWICH - REDLANDS

Labrador Child & Family Centre *Community In Action*

Labrador Child and Family Centre in Billington Street Labrador opened its doors in February 2010 with funding from the Department of Communities-Community Renewal and Gold Coast City Council for refurbishment of the a former Uniting Church Building. The focus of the Centre is the provision of a community hub for groups and services supporting families with children 12 years and under. The Centre is not disability specific, rather inclusive of all families living in Labrador and the immediate surrounds.

Following a broad community consultation, the Benevolent Society became the lead agency in a consortium of community organisations which include: FSG Australia, Lifeline, ACT 4 Kids, Kalwun and Playgroup Australia. FSGA's contribution to the Centre is through the services of Family Support Worker Michelle Bryan who welcomes participating individuals and groups to the centre, as well as maintaining her previous FSGA role i.e. providing intake and Intensive Family Support Services to families and individuals whose lives are affected by disability. Michelle took time from her very busy roles to talk about the current activities.

On the day I visited, the Intergenerational Craft Group was gathered at a large table - a happy, raucous gathering of women of all ages knitting, crocheting,

chatting and laughing. Babies slept near their Mums or grandmothers in their capsules and prams, and sometimes in their laps as they knitted, in juggling acts that defy explanation. Toddlers intermittently explored the colourful tangle of wool and thread dangling between the chairs before running off to play in the exceptionally well resourced children's indoor and outdoor play areas. As needles clacked, stories were told and friendships formed; and these endangered handicrafts regained, for a time, their former status from times past. As one woman said: 'When I came here today I was feeling a bit stressed, now I've had a laugh and the repetitive knitting has calmed my mind.'

Other activities currently operating weekly from the Centre include: playgroup, Butterfly Wings (dance and story telling for under 5's), Lifeline Family Counselling, Read and Grow Group for under 5's, and Child Health nurse visits for babies 0-12 months. Every month there is also a Cultural Sharing Morning which brings together parents from many different cultures and refugee families new to the area for morning tea, social support and education.

The bright, welcoming and accessible environment almost sings with its cheerful vibe, and I find myself reluctant to leave....surely the crochet my mother did is not that hard to pick up?



If the aim of the Centre is to enhance parent/child relationships and reduce social isolation - this morning it has succeeded. We need one in every neighbourhood! For more information about the Centre call Michelle Bryan on (07) 5528 9691.

- Denise Wallace



Photo from left to right:
Lynne Hilliam
(Senior Coordinator)
Belinda Brown
(Manager)
Janell Hion
(Coordinator)



With your help... YES WE CAN!

Your donations mean the world to us!

EVERYONE IS READY
None of us has to pass a test or meet a set of criteria before we can be included.

EVERYONE CAN LEARN
As human beings we all grow and change and make mistakes: and we are all capable of learning.

EVERYONE NEEDS SUPPORT
Sometimes some of us need more support than others.



EVERYONE CAN COMMUNICATE
Not using words doesn't mean we don't have anything to say

EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE
We need to recognise, encourage and value each person's contributions - including our own.

TOGETHER WE ARE BETTER
We are not dreaming of a world where everyone is like us - difference is our most important renewable resource.

Your donation to the FSGA Skilling, Training and Employment Partnerships (STEP) Program makes the difference between having a life full of 'programs' and 'having a life'!

For further information, please contact us on (07) 5564 0655 or visit our website www.fsg.org.au

new products have been introduced including: a natural 'spray and wipe', carpet spot-cleaner, laundry soaker and alcohol-free hand sanitiser - all of which pack a punch without dangerous fumes and chemical ingredients.

These products and FSGA's obvious passion has been show-cased to the wider community at expos and other promotions. Janell Hion says 'The response has been positive

and has stirred up interest in not only the products but also the not-for-profit social enterprise aspect.'

FSGA hope to continue to expand the Green Shop as well as its other Totally Green initiatives, Green Clean and Greening FSG (domestic cleaning and lawn/gardening services), through attracting more commercial and private contracts and promoting the services in the local human services arena.

FSGA supports the
**COMMUNITY SAFEGUARDS
COALITION 2010**



MY LIFE, MY HOME, MY SOLUTION
Safeguarding people with disability from legislation, policies and practices which deny or limit their fundamental rights

The State-wide Coalition is concerned about the growing practice of people with disability being put under pressure by current Government and non-government services to live in situations which are not appropriate to their needs or which they do not choose. Community Safeguards Coalition (CSC) calls this practice 'forced co-tenancy'.

The recently formed FSGA Forced Co-tenancy Working Party formulated the following position statement in support of this campaign:

FSGA will maintain the basic human right of choice by advocating strongly against forced co-tenancy. This intent will be communicated to the QLD Government by our decision to refuse to enter into forced co-tenancy situations. It is also the intention of FSGA to protest against any known forced co-tenancy situations that occur in connection to people accessing or previously accessing our services.

For further information regarding forced co-tenancy, please call (07) 3252 8566.

For the team at Totally Green the journey has been hard work but informative and enlightening. Their energy and enthusiasm is palpable and, they hope more of the general public will soon catch on. FSGA Totally Green promises positive outcomes for everyone – people with a disability, the environment and the customers in the communities we serve.

Please visit www.fsg.org.au to find out more about FSGA's green initiatives.

Green Perspectives

By Ashlee Dawes, Joanna Knight and Josie Brazel

Griffith University Arts/Social Enterprise and Social Work Students share their Green Shop perspectives from an interview with FSGA's 'Totally Green' team.

It has been an exciting year for FSGA Australia's Totally Green Team. The dedication and ambition of the team is obvious as they describe the Totally Green initiatives and projects they have grown to fruition. The success of Totally Green can be attributed to the organisation's shared vision that has now evolved into a successful social enterprise business. While it continues to expand, the social and environmental aims of the business have not changed, with all profits going directly back into the organisation to improve the opportunities and services FSGA Australia can provide; and offering training opportunities for people with a disability who help to run the business.

welcome when we caught up with the team at the Green Shop headquarters on Brisbane Road, Labrador. Belinda Brown, Marion Laughlin, Lynne Hilliam and Janell Hion spent time in their busy morning schedule to share their passion about Totally Green; the achievements and the things they've learned along the way. On more than one occasion, the room erupted with laughter as jokes and anecdotes were shared, a tribute to the positive atmosphere and teamwork at the office. It is also clear that the team is dedicated to ensuring FSGA's core community and environmental values resonate in every initiative.

The Green Shop's manager Belinda Brown says 'the Totally Green initiative has grown out of a genuine concern and passion for the environment rather than just a response to the fashionable green movement. It is important in all areas of FSGA Australia, from the board and executive level to every aspect of service delivery.' The Green Shop concept arose from necessity i.e. initially just servicing FSGA's internal properties and client residences with non-toxic and safe products. This meant undertaking extensive research into the contents of every day cleaners and detergents. For a group who knew next to nothing about chemicals and cleaners in the beginning, they are now very much aware of the effects they can have both to the user and to the environment.

Buyer Beware
It was during the search for these suitable products the team found themselves dealing with unclear and misleading labelling. They were startled to discover the cleaning industry in Australia is not required by law to disclose to consumers all harmful ingredient concentrations on the product label. 'You have to be careful because some of the companies could use slightly lower concentrations and therefore don't have to identify it as a hazard because it's not a 100% concentration' says Lynne Hilliam. 'We've found that there is no true 'green stamp' as such' Belinda adds. 'Companies claim to be green and really they've had to go through no processes. It's been a big learning curve for us because you can't take it at face value.'

Green Shop Products
The FSGA Green Shop now provides a range of safe, environmentally friendly, non-toxic cleaning products to the public as well. Consumers can be assured all products marketed have been subjected to rigorous research to ensure the validity of the suppliers 'green' claims. Also, unlike commercial business, all profits are directed back into the organisation to improve and expand the services and opportunities FSGA provide to the wider community. For the Green Team it's been a long road to secure and continuously maintain a truly green label. Marion Laughlin says that their current supplier is thoroughly meeting their standards and many



Green Shop
One of the many initiatives is the FSGA Green Shop which has become a cornerstone in the organisation's Totally Green initiative and philosophy. As social enterprise students from Griffith University, we received a warm

