

CHRISTMAS 2020

The GdA Board of Governance and staff wish everyone a happy, healthy, and safe Christmas and a much brighter 2021!



NEW PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR GdA REGIONS



For more information
Phone: **1800 552 272**

GdA is thrilled to welcome three new project officers who will deliver an independent living skills and peer support program in 2021. Karen McAloon, Lou Makin, and Jane McMaster make up the IPALS project team. They bring a diverse range of skills and experience to this dynamic program, overseen by GdA Project Manager Carol Starkey. The 3-year program is funded by an NDIA Information, Linkages and Capacity Building grant and will launch across the GdA region in 2021. It is designed to bring people with a disability together to gain life skills, build capacity, enjoy social interaction in a fun and supportive way, and make new friends. Call GdA on 1800 552 272 for more information.



Jane McMaster



Lou Makin



Karen McAloon

Upcoming Events

GdA AGM

December 14, 2-4pm
Alexandra Oval
Community Centre
1 Waratah Ave Ararat
ALL WELCOME

RSVP essential by December 4
for catering and seating
requirements

Ph: 1800 552 272



International Day of People with a Disability December 3

(keep an eye on your local
media for events)

or go to

www.idpwd.com.au/events/



FAREWELL TO GdA ADVOCATE JUDI SMITH AFTER 13 YEARS

It has been a privilege to have Judi as an integral part of the growing GdA landscape. Judi has seen and helped a great many people over her years at GdA as a passionate human rights advocate. Anyone who has known and worked with Judi will know that if it could be done, then it would be done. Judi also represented GdA and rural people with a disability on the Disability Advocacy Resource Unit governance group for many years. We wish her all the best for the future.



Hellos & Goodbyes

A 2020 Wrap-Up

What a rollercoaster of a year for all of us at GdA! We got into the swing of the year with much enthusiasm, only to find ourselves relocating to our spare bedrooms or make-shift spaces at home in March. It was a steep learning curve and the advocates quickly adapted to the “new norm”. Kim Wiese (Indigenous Advocate) finished her contract early in the year. Emily Anderson joined GdA in May, followed by Ballarat advocate Phil Cutts, and project officers Lou, Jane & Karen. Fiona Tipping took on a new role at GdA’s Disability Royal Commission advocate for Indigenous people across our region. Kathryn (Nhill Karen community Project Officer) will finish up in December. After 15 years Board Chairperson Jenni Starick moves on in 2021, but will continue with GdA as a Peer Support and Self Advocacy project officer. We look forward to the opportunity in 2021 to return to face to face contact with clients and Board meetings in person.

The University of Sydney Emergency Preparedness Survey of People with Disability

This study is being carried out by a research team at the Centre for Disability, Research and Policy at the University of Sydney. It aims to survey how prepared people with disability are for an emergency such as pandemic, bushfire, flood etc, and to understand what people can do for themselves and what supports they may need. The information gathered will help to find ways to assist people with disability to prepare for, respond to and recover from an emergency event. The confidential survey takes approx. 20 – 30 minutes to complete.

Go to: <https://redcap.sydney.edu.au/surveys/?s=ML4LC3KMEF>

S	M	I
R	H	A
S	T	C

How many words can you make of 4 letters or more? Each word must contain the centre letter, and each letter can only be used once. There is one 9 letter word to be found. *Believe it or not*, there are up to 100 words possible. Plurals are allowed. Have fun 🧐 🧐



You can contact the DRC directly on 1800 517 199

If you would like an advocate to support you to engage with the Royal Commission, contact **GdA on 1800 552 272.**

To speak to the **Indigenous Advocate** call **1800 978 544**

This free service can help you understand how the Disability Royal Commission works and to tell your story.

GdA can help you access free legal services & counselling

Confidentiality Guaranteed

2020 French Open: Dylan Alcott wins 2nd major quad wheelchair title



(Dylan Alcott October 11, 2020) What made Alcott happiest was putting his sport on the map again. "The media, to the public, people want to watch because it's entertaining sport. It means a lot to me, more so for not just us but the next generation of young people with a disability," he said. "I love winning grand slams, but it's not the reason I get out of bed. It's not. It's to provide opportunities and try and change perceptions." (from the ABC) www.abc.net.au

Want to Join the Human Rights campaign?

From the Human Rights Law Centre: "Creating an Australian Charter of Human Rights & Freedoms will benefit the whole community. It will help prevent human rights violations, provide a powerful tool for challenging injustices and foster a rights respecting culture."

It's time to unite the community behind a bold and positive vision of a fairer Australia - it's time to create an Australian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

A Charter is about ensuring that the values we all share – like fairness, respect, dignity and compassion – are always at the heart of all government decisions, laws and policies.

It's about clearly listing and articulating all of our human rights and freedoms so that everyone from school kids to new Australians can know their rights and understand what we value and prioritise as a community. Importantly a Charter also provides a powerful tool to challenge injustice and means if someone has their rights violated they can take action and seek justice." To take part in the campaign, go to: www.charterofrights.org.au/

Rainbow Rights and Advocacy is a self-advocacy group run by and for people with intellectual disabilities, and who identify as LGBTIQ+ and have joined to have their voices heard and support each other. Rainbow Rights meet fortnightly to discuss issues, think of ways to take their message out into the community and to plan events and activities. They work together to make sure they have the same rights, choices, and opportunities as everyone else. For more info email: rainbowrightsandadvocacy@gmail.com or phone 0490 825 094 or got to www.rainbowrights.com.au

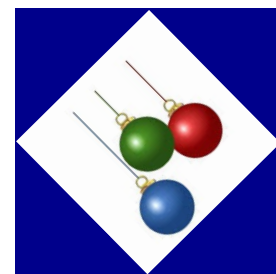


New Members Welcome

WELCOME TO YARNING SAFE'N'STRONG

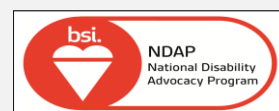
Victorian Aboriginal Health Service has established a free and confidential counselling service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. YSNS is available to people and families who need to have a yarn with someone about their wellbeing. COVID-19 has seen many in community without access to their family and other support, including face to face access to workers from Aboriginal services, leaving many feeling vulnerable and isolated. YSNS has culturally suitable counsellors to yarn safely with 'who get it', no matter how big or small the challenge. Yarning Safe 'N' Strong helpline is available 24/7. So, if you're feeling like you want someone to talk to maybe give them a call. **Help with:** Social and Emotional wellbeing, Financial wellbeing, Medical support including COVID-19 testing, Drug and alcohol counselling and rehab services.

Email ysns@vahs.org.au Facebook [@YarningSafenStrong](https://www.facebook.com/YarningSafenStrong)



What does GdA do?

- *Help you write a letter or submission to represent your interests
- *Make a telephone call with/for you or help get info to resolve a concern
- *Find information about another agency that may be able to assist
- *Provide information on disability issues
- *Support people to advocate for themselves



GdA Office Locations

- ❖ Ararat
- ❖ Stawell
- ❖ Horsham
- ❖ Daylesford
- ❖ Ballarat
- ❖ Clunes

Central Intake 1800 552 272

admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au

www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au

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