



# Newsletter December Quarter Issue 4. 2010



**Self Help Queensland Inc, Sunnybank Community Hall, 121 Lister Street**

**(PO Box 353) SUNNYBANK 4109**

**Ph/Fax 07 3344 6919 Email: [selfhelp@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au) [www.selfhelpqld.org.au](http://www.selfhelpqld.org.au)**

Self Help Queensland Inc is a network of self help organisations and groups in Queensland. The network was formed by self help organisations to share resources, support each other, assist in the development of new groups, raise community awareness of the importance of self help and provide a strong united voice on issues which affect our members.

## **From the President**

Hello everyone

Have you noticed how quickly 2010 has gone, or am I the only one?

You are probably aware that our office was flooded at the beginning of the year. We then had some staff adjustments to make, plan and execute an awareness day in Brisbane and build up some useful templates so that we could work 'smarter' and not necessarily work harder. This is on top of some good project work, the usual phone calls, e-mails, meetings and, of course, our 'normal' lives. Give some thought to the 'front-line' staff who try to manage all this.



*Thea Biesheuvel*

All community services are hard-pressed for time, we know, (as well as a regular income). We all need to learn how to better manage our time, (and money), or I should say sometimes we need to review how we look after our resources, that is, people, time, money, space, skills, etc.

When using resources, some people neatly pack and use every square of their suitcase in life; others throw some things roughly into the direction of the suitcase and vow that all will be well on the day. I'm sure you've all heard of travellers like that, (not you and me, of course!).

Time, especially, is an equal opportunity. We all have 24hours in a day. We have to learn to manage ourselves to get the most out of our time. That seems a bit like blaming the victim, doesn't it?

One of the first lessons I learnt about life balance was to record where my time was disappearing. At that time I was in full-time employment, studying part-time, had three boys at home and loved to listen to live performances of all kinds.

One of my sons asked me recently 'how did you manage all that, Mum?' To be honest, I have no idea, except to write everything down. That takes time too, of course, but it is useful when deciding what NOT to do. My diaries date back to 1980.

Every now and then when I start to feel regret about the time

(Continued on Page 3)

## Self Help Queensland Management Committee Members

President	Thea Biesheuvel
Secretary	Joe Soda
Treasurer	Chris Spriggs
Members	Casey Barber Cameron Harris Cathy Wu Clemencia Naranjo

### Committee Meetings

If you would like to attend our meetings, please contact us for dates and times. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### SHQ Staff

#### Co-ordinator

Trish Fallon

#### Project Officer - Mental Health

Gina Jacobsen

#### Project Officer - General

Mosmin Marediya

#### Administration Officer

Janette Evans

#### BOCDSG Co-ordinator

Pat Minnaar

### Office

The office is attended Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm. However, staff are sometimes required to liaise with groups or attend meetings away from the office.

If you wish to call in to use the office facilities or talk to the project officer, please phone first to ensure that someone will be available to meet with you.

### Office Location:

Sunnybank Community Hall  
121 Lister Street (Cnr Gager Street)  
Sunnybank 4109

### Postal Address

P.O. Box 353, Sunnybank QLD 4109

**Phone/Fax:** (07) 3344 6919

**Email:** selfhelp@gil.com.au

**Thanks to Queensland Health for providing funding to Self Help Queensland to help carry out its activities, and for supporting the publication of this quarterly Newsletter.**



## Regional Representation Sought for SHQ Committee

SHQ extends a warm invitation to regional and rural areas to fill a position on the SHQ Management Committee.

Ideally, the representative would come from a self help or support group, but not necessarily. Any person committed to the Sector would be welcome.

Meetings are held monthly, usually from 9.30am to 11am. The day/date is flexible to suit members. SHQ would arrange for the regional rep to engage by phone, and perhaps attend the AGM in Brisbane.

Please indicate your interest to the President, Thea, at selfhelp@gil.com.au

### Disclaimer

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of Self Help Qld.

The material supplied is for information purposes only, and is not to be used for diagnosis/treatment, or as legal, tax, accounting or any other type of advice. Self Help Qld Inc reserves the right to edit contributed articles.

### Contents

President's Message	1
SHQ Management & Contact Details	2
Solace Inc	4
Self Help News	5&6
Eating Disorders Australia	7
Playground for Seniors	8
Hearing Voices Support Group	8
Genetic Matters	9
Social Relationships and Mortality Risk	10
Did you Know?	11
High School Cure for Teen Boredom	12
Check the Manual	13
The CHI Study	13
About Respect	14
Buying Medical Treatments Online	14
Coping with grief During the Holidays	15
Chronic Conditions Self Management	16
President's Report to the SHQ AGM	17
Positive Schools 2011	19
Diary Dates	20

**"Anger is a weed; hate is the tree"**

**St Augustine of Hippo  
Philosopher and Theologian  
354 - 430**

(Continued from Page 1)

racing past, or feel I am not achieving - I conduct a review - look at where my time is going, replan and renew.

We have to do that with our Strategic work in SHQ and I'll bet that you have to do that as well. Here's my recipe for a happy year coming - 2011.

1. Record what is happening - make a colour diary or chart for two weeks. It is possible that you are filling up every inch of your suitcase with the wrong things;

2. Are you doing the unimportant things before the important things - know your own personal priorities - urgent, important, unimportant and so forth. Do we have to answer all the e-mails the minute they arrive and allow them to interrupt us? Do we spend time sorting out things that may never happen, just in case? Do we allow our thoughts and emotions to drive our direction (they're only thoughts, you know);

3. You are unique so do what you want out of your life. "Time is the most valuable coin in your life. You and you alone will determine how that coin will be spent. Be careful that you do not let other people spend it for you" says management guru, Carl Sandburg

4. Anything worth doing is worth doing better. You could get a coach or trainer to help you keep to your plan. "The only thing worse than training employees and losing them, is not training them and keeping them" according to Zig Ziglar another management guru.

5. The only thing worse than developing a good habit and not keeping to it, is not developing it and losing the plot. Get someone to back you up.

6. 'You can make excuses or make it happen but you can't do both.'

We sincerely wish that you make it happen in 2011. Have safe and happy start to our New Year.

Thea



## Lessons in Teamwork!

**"Fear is, I believe, a most effective tool in destroying the soul of an individual - and the soul of a people."**

**Anwar Sadat**

**Egyptian President 1918 - 1981 (Assassinated for working towards peace with Israel)**

**SOLACE is a Support Group**  
**For Widowed People**  
**Run by Widowed People**



SOLACE – a support group for those coping with the death of their life partner.

Solace is run by volunteers who understand the issues and trauma that follows the death of a husband, wife or life partner because they have been travelling that road themselves for some time. When one’s partner dies, “all normal life” ceases in an instant and a new way has to be found to cope with living. Until someone experiences such catastrophic happenings, it is impossible to imagine the pain, the emotional turmoil and the difficulties that will have to be faced.

Unfortunately, in our society, there is an expectation that bereaved people should be “over their grief” in a matter of weeks or months. Gradually there is a growing realisation that this is not the case. Like other major life challenges, people gradually adjust to the enormous changes that they face. The loss becomes a part of the person they become as they continue on life’s journey, just as the relationship that they had with their partner remains a part of the person they are. This can be a long and difficult process.

SOLACE aims to provide companionship along the way. Being able to share the complex, often unpredictable, at times frightening, emotional rollercoaster that follows the death of ones partner with others who have travelled a similar path can be enormously beneficial. Many people experience shock, numbness, anger, guilt, disruption to sleeping and eating patterns, depression, anxiety, a lack of concentration and confidence, bitterness, helplessness and many other often unexplored emotions. Knowing that others have experienced the turmoil that follows the death of their own life companion, and been able to work through that to build a new, fulfilling life, can be of tremendous comfort.

SOLACE aims to:

- \* Help normalise the grieving process and reassure those who grieve that their feelings are normal.
- \* Provide a safe environment in which grief can be freely expressed.
- \* Assist people in adjusting to their loss.
- \* Provide opportunities for involvement in social activities where the possibilities of new friendships and interests can be explored.

In Queensland each of the three SOLACE branches meet twice each month. If you would like any further information you are welcome to contact one of the numbers listed below.

LOCATION	CONTACT PERSON	VENUE
Gold Coast	Betty on 5580 7034	Pacific Fair Meeting Room 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday
Mt Gravatt	Kathy on 3341 4643	Garden City Library Meeting 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday
Chermside	Charles on 3263 9121	Chermside Library 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday

**“Each man is good in His sight. It is not necessary for eagles to be crows.”**

**Sitting Bull**  
**1831–1890**  
**Hunkpapa Tribe, Sioux Nation**

# SELF HELP QUEENSLAND NEWS 1

---

## **The Mercury is Rising again! Self Help Queensland Inc. Mental Health Support Group Project is back and waiting for your input!**

Self Help Qld (SHQ) has received a second one off funding from The Community Mental Health Branch; Department of Communities to continue to help build the capacity of mental health self help support groups across the State. As with the previous project facilitated by Diana East the current project includes Self Help Groups established to support individuals experiencing signs and symptoms of mental ill health and/or having diagnosed mental ill health. This may also include groups whose members may have a dual diagnosis of mental ill health and drug/alcohol dependence/abuse.

This time around there will also be a small incubator project to learn about the needs of Groups who identify as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) as well as experiencing signs and symptoms of mental ill health and/or having diagnosed mental ill health.

We know that support groups may be strengthened in numerous ways including the development of skills, the transfer of knowledge, problem solving, building partnerships, networking, and infrastructure and resourcing. However, we would like to know what would strengthen **YOUR** mental health support group and help to keep it going into the future. The project will also be re-establishing its **small grants program** for equipment, social outings, tuition and skills improvement, resources, group projects eg art exhibition etc. So if you haven't already spoken with or emailed Gina Jacobsen the new mental health project worker, she would love to hear from you as soon as possible on the below details.

As previously identified by Diana, an important outcome of this project will be increased promotion and recognition of self help support groups as a viable component of the mental health service sector that individually supports and directly involves people living with mental ill health.

If you were part of this project previously, or identify as a support group established to support individuals experiencing signs and symptoms of mental ill health and/or having diagnosed mental ill health and are interested in getting involved, or know of a group who does please contact Gina Jacobsen (Project Worker Mental Health) on 04873

---

## **SHQ Office Closure**

The Self Help Queensland office will close on Wednesday 22nd December 2010 for the annual holiday break, and will re-open on Monday 11th January 2011. Emails, along with phone messages left on the answering machine will be attended to as soon as possible.

---

## **We've Shortened the Newsletter**

Due to feedback received by the Management Committee that the newsletter is too long, we have shortened it by 6 pages.

In 2011 we will be trialling a monthly email bulletin along with the regular quarterly newsletter. We look forward to any constructive criticism in this regard.  
Email: [selfhelp@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au)

# SELF HELP QUEENSLAND NEWS 2

---

## Welcome Mosmin

Self Help Queensland welcomes and congratulates Mosmin Maridya on her appointment to the position of Project Worker commencing on 17th January 2011. Funded by the Brisbane City Council, the community development position will be for approximately six months and will see Mosmin engaging with self help groups in the Greater Brisbane area.

Apart from her community welfare qualifications and experience, Mosmin is an overseas trained Physiotherapist - an added bonus in understanding the nature of many health issues affecting members of self help groups.

---

## Please Put This Date in Your Diary Now!

### Self Help and Support Groups Awareness Day

**Thursday 8th September 2011**

All the States are keen to grow National Awareness Day into a bigger, more celebrated and better recognised day next year. We are hereby sending an invitation to Queensland self help and support groups to come on board again next year, or join us for the first time. It may be 12 months away, but we need to start planning now! All offers of assistance will be very welcome. Any planning, marketing, publicity, creative or other expertise particularly welcome!

If you need any information or have any ideas please call Trish for a chat on 3344 6919 or email [selfhelp@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au) We are particularly eager to include regional and rural groups in 2011, as well as those who were unable to participate in 2010.

---

## Does Your Group Have Public Liability Insurance Problems?

Do you have a problem with your meeting venues? Are people demanding that you insure against Public Liability? If you are incorporated you have to carry insurance, but if you're not incorporated you are not legally obliged to do that. We'd like to collect information and see what we can do about this. Contact us on [selfhelp@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au)

---

## 2001 Workshops

In **May and September 2011** Self Help Queensland will be offering workshops for which self help and support groups can nominate one or two people. The cost of these workshops will be kept very low. Topics will be chosen from requests received from groups, so please let us know of any special areas that are of interest to your group.

Topics might include subjects such as succession planning, applying for grants, telephone skills in dealing with grief, anger etc, governance issues, or any other subjects groups may request. Perhaps a few subjects could be covered in a day.

Email: [self help@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au)

---

## Online Searchable Directory

It's been a saga of unexpected proportions, notably technical issues, but we are still working behind the scenes on the searchable Directory of Qld Self Help and Support Groups. Thank you for your patience and we will keep you advised of its progress !



## Informed by the Recovery Model 'A Way of Viewing Treatment as a Self Directed Path to Wellness'

My name is Holly and I am a Resource Support Worker with the Eating Disorders Association. I had the fantastic opportunity to learn about the work of Self Help Queensland when I attended your AGM a few months back.

I discovered that there are passionate groups of people working together to support each other and achieve amazing things and I identified that a similar philosophy underpins both organisations. I would like to continue the dialogue between our organisations; sharing this information with you about the work that we do so you can tell others about us if you meet someone effected by an eating disorder and telling our members through our newsletter about the host of mental health support and other self help groups that you run.

The Eating Disorders Resource Centre provides a 9am to 4pm information, support and referral service for people experiencing eating issues, their families, friends, partners and carers. We can send you our Information Pack by post and offer support and short-term telephone counseling to give you some tools and strategies to help you understand and tackle the distress in the short term and get you connected to some ongoing support in the long term. Our directory includes therapists and other professionals with specialist knowledge in the treatment and support of people with eating disorders. We can also put you in touch with other services pertaining to identified issues.

Our organisation was set up by carers of people with Eating Disorders and is informed by the recovery model – as a way of viewing treatment as a self directed path to wellness, and as a model to run the organisation incorporating the insights of people who have experienced and cared for people with eating issues in severe states of emotional distress and who have recovered.

Part of putting the recovery model into practice in our organisation is putting on support groups, co-facilitated by both an experienced group therapist working in the field and a person with lived experience of having an eating disorder or caring for someone who did, who can provide that light at the end of the tunnel and eliminate any fear of stigma or judgement.

We also encourage people to work from their expertise and support each other by forming their own groups. We resource people to do this with our Support Groups Resource Kit that has been developed to assist health professionals, groups or individuals in establishing and maintaining a healthy support group for people affected by eating disorders. If you are interested in having a look at this resource for its application in your group contexts it is available free to download at [http://eda.org.au/images/EDA\\_FINAL.pdf](http://eda.org.au/images/EDA_FINAL.pdf) or in hardcopy for \$35 by calling our office on 3394 3661.

Thanks for this opportunity to be in touch with you all.

Holly

---

***"My years as a medical practitioner, as well as my own first-hand experience, have taught me how important self-help groups are in assisting their members in dealing with problems, stress, hardship and pain... the benefits of mutual aid are experienced by millions of people who turn to others with a similar problem to attempt to deal with their isolation, powerlessness, alienation, and the awful feeling that nobody understands... Health and human service providers are learning that they can indeed provide a superior service when they help their patients and clients find appropriate peer support."***

**- former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, MD**



## London Leads the World with "Playground for Seniors"

In an idyllic corner of the gardens of Hyde Park, London, a new outdoor facility featuring equipment designed for Pensioners was opened in May 2010.

The project was funded by a grant from Westminster City Council under a scheme to allow people in local council wards to choose neighbourhood improvement projects. When the project was announced it was covered in more than 500 newspapers and the Knightsbridge Association was inundated with inquiries from around the world about how to create something similar.

The "Playground" features six pieces of Danish equipment designed to be simple to use and provide gentle exercise, including twisting, swinging, walking and cycling movements. The only piece that slightly alarmed a group of senior citizens testing the playground was the sit-up apparatus.

People can come and have fun and socialise at the same time," said Madeline Elsdon, the person behind the project. She said the playground would appeal to those who wanted to do something other than just walk in the park and found gyms intimidating and expensive. "We wanted to do something that led the way. But there are few facilities for adults and very few for older adults. We hope in the future that every park will have a playground for older people."

Editor's note: Any Queensland Councils seeking to be world leaders also?



## Brisbane Hearing Voices Support Group

Don't be alone we are here to help

*The Brisbane Hearing Voices Support Group Is a group for people who hear or have heard voices*

Hearing Voices support groups are not to be viewed as therapy but as a place where people can meet others with similar experiences and gain support and information about their experiences, they are a safe place where people can meet in a non judgemental atmosphere and help break down the isolation often associated with the hearing voices experience

**For more information contact:** Mary or Steven 0430572653/ 0423208218

Email [stevenranke@gmail.com](mailto:stevenranke@gmail.com)

**Meeting Dates:** Every Tuesday from 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

**Venue:** Mt Gravatt Community Centre 1693 Logan Rd **Bus** 175 or 172. Bus Stop no 40

***"Mutual support groups, involving little or no cost to participants, have a powerful effect on mental and physical health..."***

***The psychological and physical health importance of this diffuse community is striking...***

***The self-help movement, both in face-to-face and virtual arenas, has tremendous therapeutic potential."***

- **American Psychologist** feature article "Who Talks?: The Social Psychology of Illness Support Groups" by K. P. Davison, J. W. Pennebaker, & S.S. Dickerson, (55) 2, pp. 205-217, 2000.



# Genetic Matters

*by Kim Summers PhD*

## **Don't stress about it.**

A while ago I wrote about broken heart syndrome, the physical manifestation of an intense experience, such as death of a close relative or friend, discovery of a betrayal, or even a surprise party. The acute symptoms of broken heart syndrome (resembling a heart attack) resolve over a period of days, although the feeling of being constantly on the alert (brought on by high levels of adrenaline, the stress hormone, in the blood) can last for months or even years. There are also mental effects of a traumatic event, which in extreme form have been made famous as post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as experienced by veterans of recent wars.

PTSD is a psychiatric diagnosis which may be made when a person who has experienced severe trauma (threatening or causing physical harm to the individual or a close friend or relative) feels ongoing fear, horror, helplessness which is exacerbated by recurring visualisation of the traumatic event and extreme response to any triggers which remind the sufferer of the event. The onset of symptoms may be delayed for some months after the trauma, and the symptoms may take years to resolve or even continue for life. For a formal diagnosis of the condition, the patient must have been exposed to a traumatic event and to have experienced fear, helplessness or horror. The patient must experience flashbacks in which the experience is relived over and over again, and avoid stimuli associated with the trauma. The patient will show signs of persistent arousal (caused by chronically elevated adrenaline levels) such as difficulty sleeping, and will have ongoing impairment of functioning in social or professional situations. Finally these symptoms will have persisted for more than a month. A diagnosis of PTSD may be associated with a poor prognosis with the need for psychiatric or psychological support and medication.

Combat associated stress ("shell shock") has been reported for thousands of years. The psychiatric diagnosis of PTSD was formalised in the 1970s to explain the recurring symptoms in veterans of the Vietnam war. It is now recognised as a response to extreme stress in similar professions such as the police and in other individuals who experience or witness extreme, stressful situations. This includes victims of railway and air accidents, sexually abused children and those with a diagnosed life-threatening illness.

But there is now evidence that responding to stress in a way which might indicate PTSD (revisiting the trauma, avoiding triggers) is a normal healthy process which humans use to come to terms with a stressful event, incorporate it into their history and move beyond it. As with many psychiatric or psychological diagnoses, there may be a level which is healthy and necessary and an extreme level which is dysfunctional. Although unexpected flashbacks and triggers can be distressing, calmly reviewing the experience, making notes or talking to someone about it may be beneficial, especially if it helps to make sense of the trauma. Avoidance of places, people, events associated with the trauma is understandable and may be necessary in the early stages of recovery. Anger, stress and depression are also easily understood. Dealing with the consequences of a stressful experience only becomes a disorder when it doesn't get better with time, when it continues to debilitate and interfere with daily living.

Most of us have been through a major stressful event in our lives, and something like 50% have been involved in the kind of experience that might trigger PTSD. Yet not everyone gets the full blown condition. Some people go through the initial healthy response, then the symptoms diminish and they are able to get on with their lives.

(Continued from Page 9)

When two people undergo the same experience and yet respond differently, we immediately suspect that DNA might make a difference. A number of experiments to test this have been reported. Mice with different genetic backgrounds respond differently to fearful stimuli, even when reared in the same environment. Studies of human twins and multigeneration families have shown a strong familial tendency in whether PTSD develops in response to trauma. There are differences in blood chemicals between people with PTSD and those without following the same stressful situation.

The good thing about finding a genetic link is that it gives clues about how to treat the debilitating consequences of PTSD. Animal studies have revealed a number of genes which are activated during a response to stress, including genes for neurotransmitters (which carry signals between nerves) and genes for proteins responsible for synthesising and breaking down the neurotransmitters. Genetic variation in one gene seemed to be associated with the risk of child abuse victims developing PTSD as adults.

If we can understand the reasons why the response of some of us to stress is extreme, protracted and debilitating, while others pass through the initial reaction to a healthy adjustment, we may be able to channel resources to those most in need of care and counselling after a large-scale ordeal like a war, cyclone or institutional abuse. It will also help to develop drugs and other treatments so that people who have been scarred mentally by trauma can rejoin the community and bring to it the wisdom and care fostered by their experience.

<http://www.nnt.nhs.uk/mh/leaflets/post%20trau.pdf>

**Kim is a Senior Scientist at the Roslin Institute, University of Edinburgh and a member of the School of Molecular and Microbial Sciences at UQ. Kim is also a valued past member of the SHQ management committee.**

---

## **Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review**

The latest research **showing the value of social support for good health** is a **meta analysis examination of 148 studies that had examined the role of social support**. The citation is...

Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Layton JB, 2010 Social Relationships and Mortality Risk: A Meta-analytic Review. PLoS Med 7(7): e1000316.doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000316  
The complete article is at:

<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1000316>

### **Of interest is this excerpt from the 'conclusion':**

'Physicians, health professionals, educators, and the public media take risk factors such as smoking, diet, and exercise seriously; the data presented here make a compelling case for social relationship factors to be added to that list. With such recognition, medical evaluations and screenings could routinely include variables of social well-being; medical care could recommend if not outright promote enhanced social connections; hospitals and clinics could involve patient support networks in implementing and monitoring treatment regimens and compliance, etc.

Health care policies and public health initiatives could likewise benefit from explicitly accounting for social factors in efforts aimed at reducing mortality risk. Individuals do not exist in isolation; social factors influence individuals' health through cognitive, affective, and behavioral pathways. Efforts to reduce mortality via social relationship factors will require innovation, yet innovation already characterizes many medical interventions that extend life at the expense of quality of life. Social relationship-based interventions represent a major opportunity to enhance not only the quality of life but also survival.'

## Did You Know?

Did you know that the Productivity Commission has calculated the non-government, non-business groups' contribution to our national economy? They say there are around 600,000 organisations in this sector. 4.6 million Volunteers work in this sector and it is contributing \$43 billion to Australia's economy. Find more at <http://www.pc.gov.au/projects/study/not-for-profit/report/key-points>

---

The Queensland (and Federal) Government are trying to simplify procedures for interacting with various Departments. They have drawn up statements of what they will do. The Queensland Compact is a partnership agreement designed to guide the relationship between the Non-profit Community Services Sector and the Queensland Government to achieve better outcomes for Queenslanders. The Compact Governance Committee oversees implementation of the Queensland Compact. Look up [www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/departments/about/corporate-plans/queensland-compact](http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/departments/about/corporate-plans/queensland-compact)

As part of this compact the Department of Communities provides a direct link to COMSIS, the single most comprehensive source of local, regional and state wide information on the level of education, employment groups, families, housing, income, remoteness and disadvantage. This is so that we can use statistics to plan our projects. Find them at <http://statistics.oesr.qld.gov.au/comsis>

---

The Office of Fair Trading, which registers groups that are incorporated, is seeking feedback on a Draft Bill to make amendments to the Associations Incorporations Act and the Collections Act (if you wanted to get donations/raffles, etc.). You have until 10<sup>th</sup> December to give them your thoughts. Go to [www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au)

---

The Federal Government, via the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations is looking for groups/organisations interested in their Social Enterprise Development and Investment Fund (SEDIF). Find out more on [www.socialinclusion.gov.au](http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au)

---

Did you know that scientists have looked at possible links between Western lifestyles, especially diets, and ADHD? Learn more at [www.adhd.com.au](http://www.adhd.com.au)

---

Mayo Clinic Proceedings is an American peer-reviewed journal published by Dowden Health Media and sponsored by the Mayo Clinic. It covers the field of medicine and was established in 1926 as the *Proceedings of the Staff Meetings of the Mayo Clinic*. They have researched the link between sexual abuse and attempts at suicide, anxiety problems, depression, or eating disorders. It seems clear that this link persisted regardless of gender or age at which the abuse occurred. Find out more at [www.mayoclinicproceedings.com](http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.com) and read the paper by L. Chen and others.

---

Heart disease risk assessment doesn't depend on a bunch of fancy and expensive tests, cardiologists have said. A basic assessment that includes cholesterol level, blood pressure, age, sex, family history and whether an individual smokes or has diabetes is the strongest tool a doctor can use in predicting the likelihood of heart disease in people who don't have any symptoms of disease.

The findings were released in a joint statement from the American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Assn. The statement includes specific guidelines for how people without symptoms should be assessed for heart disease and is published online in the [Journal of the American College of Cardiology](http://www.jacc.org).

---

You will also find some useful information on depression and anxiety in males at [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

(Continued from Page 11)

Who are you? We spend our days telling ourselves or others that we are someone, or no one important, someone big or little, etc. Start defining yourself by using some questionnaires available on-line, such as can be found at <http://mindmedia.com>

---

The Weekend Australian of 6<sup>th</sup> November carried an article headed: **Self-harm a far bigger problem than thought**. It reports that previous thinking, based partly on a US survey, held that self-harm was largely a problem among you women who were hysterical or doing it to attract attention. Some results report that it affects 11.1% of our population, that men are more likely to hit walls, bang their heads or provoke others into harming them. The Medical Journal Australia has published research to show there are clear links between persistent self-harm and suicidal behaviour. Want to find out more? Go to [www.mja.com.au](http://www.mja.com.au)

---

If you have a problem with your phone or internet provider, you have a right to complain. Making a successful complaint is pretty straightforward, especially when you know your rights. The tip sheet provided by the **Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN)** gives five simple steps to make your complaint heard – and hopefully, resolved quickly.

[www.accan.org.au/blog.php?category=general](http://www.accan.org.au/blog.php?category=general)

---

## High School Hits Upon Cure for Teen Boredom - Make Them Blue



**A high school has installed special blue-tinted lighting to combat the drowsy indifference often associated with teenagers.**

The system, developed by Philips electronics corporation, is being tested in two laboratories at Epsom & Ewell High School in Surrey, southeastern England.

The initial impact has been positive, according to principal Alex Russell. A trial involving other schools could follow.

The SchoolVision technology aims to compensate for a biological quirk of teenagers, which means their body clocks tend to lag behind those of younger children and adults.

They find it harder to learn early in the mornings and perform best in the evenings. The body clock, which governs waking and sleeping cycles, is kept in time with night and day by cells in the retina, which respond most strongly to the blue part of the spectrum.

When stimulated, the cells trigger the release of an "alertness" hormone, melatonin.

The hope is that exposing students to a dose of blue light will help to wake them up. "Lighting has not been seriously considered as a factor in performance until now," said Effie Konstatinou, a psychologist at City University, London, who is leading the research.

"We know that there's a direct link between lighting, well-being and performance." The system is already used in 20 schools in Germany, and more than 80 classrooms in The Netherlands.

It has four settings: focus, energy, calm and normal. Under focus and energy, the lighting is more intense and contains extra blue. The red-tinted calm setting is designed to settle a class towards the end of the day, when disruptive behavior is most frequent.

(Source: [www.news.com.au/world](http://www.news.com.au/world) 26th November 2010)

## Check the Manual to Make Sure Things are on Track

Whether it's cars or gadgets, even the most mechanically-minded of us sometimes need to refer to "the manual" to make sure things are running well.

The Andrology Australia Men's Health Manual is a great reference to help men recognise when their overall health is a matter of concern.

The Manual aims to get men thinking about factors which can greatly influence their overall wellbeing both physically and mentally. Even if there's nothing wrong, being aware of possible issues goes a long way to help when things get off track.

The Men's Health Manual contains a selection of information for men covering reproductive and general health. It offers a great starting point for men wanting to know more about how they can improve their health for themselves and their family.

The pack contains the Men's Health Tool Kit, a resource developed by Foundation 49.

This excellent booklet touches on a number of health issues men need to think about – healthy eating, talking to the doctor, getting regular exercise, as well as health tips for every decade of a man's life.

For men who want to find out more specific information, the pack contains a range of other resources and order forms, including the popular Men's Health Contact List. This wallet-sized fold out list contains the contact details of a wide range of services in the area of men's health.

**The Men's Health Manual is now available free of charge to order through the Andrology Australia website [www.andrologyaustralia.org](http://www.andrologyaustralia.org) or by calling us on 1300 303 878.**

(Source: Andrology Australia Newsletter "The Healthy Male" Spring 2010)



## THE CHI STUDY

The CHI (Charting Health Impacts) Study is about the impact of hepatitis C on peoples' lives. The study follows a group of people over time – looking at all the health and social aspects of life – so they can tell community organisations, doctors and governments what it is really like to live with hepatitis C.

Joining the study involves taking an anonymous online survey, which you can take your time completing. We (the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS) at La Trobe University) then contact you in three to six months so you can tell us how things have changed for you.

If you have ever been told that you have hepatitis C (even if you have had treatment since then) and you are interested in participating in the study, or if you just want to find out more about the project and hepatitis C, you can access the Chi Study here. Please be sure to let your experience count and let us know about how hepatitis C has affected you.

To participate in the study go to: <http://www.chistudy.org.au/participant-information>

---

**"To many, total abstinence is easier than perfect moderation."**

**St Augustine of Hippo (Now modern day Annaba, Algeria)  
Patron Saint of Brewers  
354 - 430**

## Promoting the Health, Rights & Well-Being of ALL Queensland Sex Workers



Respect Inc is a non-profit sex worker peer-based organisation focused on the rights and wellbeing of sex workers in Queensland. We provide a formal medium to communicate sex worker issues and concerns so as to improve the rights of our peers and respond to our workplace health & safety and other needs regardless of gender, age, location, industry sector, cultural background or linguistic abilities.

The organisation is funded by Queensland Health to provide services to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis and other Sexually Transmitted Infections in the Queensland Sex Industry. We provide up-to-date information and education to sex workers and service providers who have contact with sex workers through various communication mechanisms, including resources to inform and enhance the knowledge of sex workers and their clients in relation to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's), Hepatitis & HIV/AIDS issues that affect their health and wellbeing.

Respect Inc recognises how important being able to give culturally appropriate services is, so we operate within an affirmative action framework. This means all direct services are provided by peers (sex workers past or present) and sex workers are included within all levels of the organisation, including management, staff and volunteers. We aim to foster a culture of inclusiveness and mutual respect within the diverse community of sex workers.

Our offices are set up as a safe drop in space for sex workers meaning we invite all sex workers to come in and say hello, pick up some supplies, relax, have a chat, pick up some information and attend workshops. We require people who are not sex workers to call for an appointment before attending our offices. If you're a sex worker, it's a good idea to give us a call before you drop in, just in case we are out on outreach.

### Contact Respect:

Brisbane  
Ph: 07 3835 1111  
28 Mein Street  
Spring Hill  
Brisbane Qld 4000

Townsville  
Ph: 07 4724 4853  
118a Charters Towers Rd  
Hermit Park  
Townsville Qld 4812

Cairns  
Ph: 07 4051 5009  
7/24 Florence Street,  
Cairns Qld 4870

URL: [www.respectqld.org.au](http://www.respectqld.org.au)

Email: [info@respectqld.org.au](mailto:info@respectqld.org.au)

---

## Buyer Beware: Buying Medical Treatments Online

'The World Health Organization reports that up to one per cent of medicines in industrialised countries may be counterfeit, but this figure is much higher in developing countries with less regulation. As medicines for "sexual performance enhancement" have a huge market around the world, there is potential for any unsuspecting man to purchase counterfeit medicine if buying overseas or from the internet.'

The class of medicines used to treat erectile dysfunction (PDE-5 inhibitors) are not on the Australian government list of 'prohibited imports and exports (drugs and precursor chemicals)' and can therefore be bought on the internet with an Australian prescription. Authors of the first report of an Australian man with a severe case of hypoglycaemia associated with taking a sexual performance-enhancing medication are calling for a health warning to be placed on the TGA website and for universal regulation of the sale of drugs on the internet.

Source: Andrology Australia Newsletter, Issue 36, Spring 2010

## Coping with Grief During the Holidays

(Some Suggestions of Unknown Origin)



- \* When it hurts too much to talk - write.
- \* Make a list of things/activities in the past that you have most enjoyed and what you have enjoyed the least—what could you eliminate or change?
- \* Try to celebrate in a way that is more meaningful to you and your family.
- \* Don't be afraid to express feelings - tears are an expression of love and emotion.
- \* A good way to help prevent depression is to plan ahead.
- \* Take time to consider your expectations.
- \* Start a new holiday tradition - volunteer, light a candle in memory etc
- \* Eliminate unnecessary stresses.
- \* Think about what the holiday stands for in your own life.
- \* Do what is right for you during the holidays.
- \* Seek to share some of the day or season with those relatives or friends whose company you enjoy.
- \* Embrace your treasures of memories.
- \* Acknowledge the presence of grief in the holiday period. If the grief relates to a death, include the person who has died in rituals and traditions.
- \* Make a contribution to something in memory of the deceased.
- \* Create a memory garden; plant something that flowers or fruits.
- \* Include the deceased in conversations - let others know you are comfortable talking about your deceased one. They will relate stories about the person that add to your pleasant memories.

***"One of the most important capabilities of community self-help groups is that ordinary people can develop such groups in their local communities when none exist, and subsequently their group usually serves as an extraordinary resource to many in that area for several years. I still find it amazing that to start a group, a person doesn't need a grant, an agency, or even an office - just the inspiration and a few other people who share their experience and hope. What significantly helps in providing such inspiration is a person's knowledge of an existing national organization or a model group, which can provide them with basic information so they don't have to 're-invent the wheel.'*"**

E. J. Madara, "Mutual Aid Self-Help Group Developments" Community Psychologist, 39 (3), 2006, p. 21.



**Siblings Australia Has Fought a Good Fight to Stay Alive  
- and they haven't given up yet!**

Kate Strohm, Director of Siblings Australia has advised that the Siblings Australia office will close down within the next two weeks. "Things will be packed up and put into storage - we have not been able to access funding from the Australian government so there was no choice. It is devastating, especially as we have been through this before. However, we are not giving up and will continue to lobby for siblings to be recognised by government - in relation to both their contribution and their needs. There are several ways people can stay in touch. Go to [www.siblingsaustralia.org.au](http://www.siblingsaustralia.org.au)



## Chronic Conditions Self-Management Courses To be Run Throughout Queensland In 2011

Throughout Queensland in 2011, Spiritus will be conducting self management courses for people with chronic conditions.

Course dates are still being finalised for 2011 but are constantly being run throughout the year so if anyone is interested in attending one in their area they can call 1300 785 853 for dates and times of courses in their area.

The next Brisbane North course will be 19/1/2011 from 9am - 11.30 am. Courses can also be run at external venues if facilities can be provided. They are run for a minimum of eight and a maximum of fifteen participants.

The course teaches the life skills needed in day-to-day management of chronic conditions and to embrace life's opportunities. It has been designed to enhance regular treatment and disease-specific education and will not conflict with existing programs or treatments. Consequently, the program developed by the School of Medicine at Stanford University, has been life-changing for a number of people.

The program has been implemented in the United Kingdom, known as the Expert Patient Program. The Stanford Model has been used widely throughout USA, Canada and extensively translated for use in other countries. The Australian government has initiated a major focus on chronic disease which currently contributes to over 70% of the disease burden in Australia. The Stanford Model is being used throughout Australia.

The two and a half hour workshops run once a week, over a period of six weeks, will be highly participative. The format reduces an individual's sense of isolation, facilitates peer learning and sharing, and has a strong goal setting and problem solving focus. The aim is to promote self-efficacy by building attendees confidence, empowering people to manage their health, and therefore maintain active and fulfilling lives. Studies have shown self-managers have more effective relationships their general practitioners and other health care professionals resulting in enhanced productive outcomes and reduced episodes of hospitalisations.

Subjects covered include:

- 1 Techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation
- 2 Appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility and endurance
- 3 Appropriate use of medications
- 4 Communicating effectively with family, friends and health professionals
- 5 Nutrition
- 6 How to evaluate new treatments

The course is available to HACC eligible individuals and/or their spouse, partner or carer which includes morning tea at no cost. HACC, or Home and Community Care, is designed to help people stay independent and living at home. Most people with chronic conditions are eligible and this service enables a vast majority of older Australians to live independently in their own homes. Transport can be arranged if required.

Each week clients are provided with a great deal of information. The purchase of the course manual *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions* is recommended.

**Phone 1300 785 853 for dates and times of courses in your area**



## President's Report to the Self Help Queensland AGM 2011

This is my first report as your President and I am happy to see your support here today. As is usual at these gatherings I would like to reflect a little on the year that has gone, so that we can celebrate our achievements, gather learnings from the past year and then prepare for the year that will be. Since the last time we all met we have had many small and incremental changes. We said farewell to a number of staff and volunteers and welcomed some others.

Most of you will be aware of the devastation caused by the flooding of our office during the last Christmas break. For those of you who are not aware, there are photos available. Your present Management Committee has come out of these trials with flying colours, even though compensation has not as yet been forthcoming. We welcomed our new Treasurer, Chris Spriggs, in April, but said goodbye to our Vice-President in August. Thanks to them both for being so willing. We have been able to recruit excellent project workers and a new Admin Assistant. We are also happy to have on board some dedicated volunteers, in those nominated today.

We especially welcome the Brisbane Obsessive Compulsive Disorders Group, under the leadership of Pat Minnaar, to our integrated and multicultural team.

None of this would have been possible without the second grant from the Department of Communities. We continue to owe both the Department as an entity and the staff as individuals many thanks, especially Margi Maddison, Emma Foreman and Ivan Frkovic. This grant will ensure a second phase for the mental health project, under the leadership of Gina Jacobsen, and so sustain yet more groups while continuing to build the capacity of those groups already identified. A warm welcome to Gina.

We also received a grant from the Brisbane City Council Community Development Fund to identify and support self help groups in the Brisbane area. We owe them a big thank you for helping us to identify and sustain general support groups closer to home. This project will be taken on board by Mosmin Mareidya. A warm welcome to Mosmin.

Administering these projects is no mean feat and we are lucky to have a good team coordinated by Trish Fallon. This is made possible by the new 3-year agreement signed with Queensland Health. They have been funding Trish's position since 1995 and we must recognise their ongoing support. Reporting and acquitting these grants is no mean feat either and we were lucky to find Janette Evans take care of the fine detail. Janette also doubles as Minute taker and extra hands and brains when the need arises. Welcome and thank you, Janette.

Queensland Health granted us one-off funding for our Awareness Day activities which took place in the city on 9<sup>th</sup> September. Some fifty-six groups participated and some eight groups sent their brochures. This grant came through just as we were starting to despair. All of us combined our various skills to get all the promotional materials designed and ordered, marquees hired and erected, a floor plan in place and, most importantly, bottled water and lunch monies distributed to all participants. We have not yet received the feedback needed to acquit this grant. I want to pay tribute especially to Trish Fallon and Janette Evans for work above and beyond the call of duty and to Joe Soda and Eric Jesson for supplying the muscles when they were most needed. Thanks to all of you.

Unfortunately we received the green light at the same time as the Federal Elections were announced, so you can hazard a guess at how successful our Media Plan turned out to be. We have succeeded in some coverage by what used to be BRIZ31, now [www.digital.31.com.au](http://www.digital.31.com.au) or digital 44 and I'm fast becoming

(Continued on Page 18)

(Continued from Page 17)

a Media Tart. Next year will be a different media climate with some regional activities.

The Gambling Community Benefit Fund was good to us this year, granting us money for our new computers and the meeting room chairs, which you should inspect at your leisure.

This year we have joined our own 'employer' organisation, Jobs Australia, to have their expertise and legal advice at our fingertips. We have joined QCOSS and the Queensland Compact Forum so that we can exercise a stronger voice on your behalf and signed the National Compact to form a National 'third sector'. Trish and I participated in the Griffith University's Job Forum and met some of the excellent people I have introduced to you during our Elections today. We have organised a Strategic Planning day with staff and volunteers, the result of which is our Strategic Plan document, available today.

You will have noticed some lovely signs both out the front of the building and near our entrance. We thank Councillor and Deputy Mayor Graham Quirk for permission to erect these. We also owe Graham thanks for our new Data Projector, through the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund, which will make this available to groups in the years to come.

We attended to business as usual during this turbulent time, assisting people to start groups, disseminating information for groups and professionals, joining in advocacy on behalf of groups with QCOSS and others, making referrals and writing letters of support as well as maintaining our ever-growing database so it can be linked to our Web-site. Our Newsletters are always a talking point amongst our groups and we have Trish to thank for that.

Now, what about the future? Let me pose a question. Are you well? We pride ourselves on focussing on wellbeing, but what does that mean?

Researchers Tom Rath and Jim Harten, write in the Weekend Australian Health section that they have done surveys in more than 150 countries, on 98% of the population. They give us the following recipe for wellbeing:-

- Like what you do each day;
- Have strong social or strong close relationships;
- Manage your own economic future/finances;
- Ensure you have enough energy to complete the day's tasks; and
- Be involved in where you live.

Self help and support groups can give you all those to nurture your own wellbeing.

We don't as yet have a clairvoyant on our Committee, so we don't know what the future will bring, but we will continue our work towards getting a unified self help and support group sector. In times when many major groups lobby governments direct it seems appropriate for us to do so too. However, it is crucial that we remain vigilant to the danger of the community sector becoming nothing more than the vehicle for 'government at arm's length' and stay faithful to our belief that self help and support groups are better able to foster recovery and have a longer lasting effect on the participants.

We will continue to work in partnership with you, our members, to sustain you as a group, and to help you support your members. We will also be calling you together again on subjects of your choosing. I commend our Strategic Plan to your attention.

We have attracted some very talented new Committee members (Continued on Page 19)

(Continued from Page 18)

which will help us remain proactive in the provision of networking, training and support, especially for our paid and volunteer staff, but also for you, our members.

I wish to thank the Management Committee for their wholehearted support over this turbulent year and the new members of our team for joining us. A warm welcome to Clemencia Naranjo, Cathy Wu, Beatrice del Rosario and Cameron Harris.

All of us here wish you a year in which your group goes from strength to strength. Thank you for coming,

Thea Biesheuvel, B.A., MScSoc.,  
Justice of the Peace (Qual)  
President

---

## **Invitation to attend Positive Schools 2011 Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference**

Brisbane, 26th - 27th May 2011

The Positive Schools 2010 event was a complete sellout. Book now to avoid disappointment.

The Queensland Positive Schools 2011 mental health and wellbeing conference will be held on 26th – 27th May 2011 at The Brisbane Convention Centre in Brisbane, Queensland.

### **Positive Schools Masterclass on Bullying and Aggression**

26th May: For the first day of the inaugural Queensland Positive Schools conference 2011, we are thrilled to present a MASTERCLASS on finding realistic and sustainable solutions to bullying and aggression.

Acclaimed TV journalist and ABC Lateline anchor man **Tony Jones** will introduce and challenge an exclusive panel of three international experts in the field of bullying. We welcome **Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Professor Matthew Sanders & Professor Donna Cross**.

Michael Carr-Gregg is one of Australia's highest profile psychologists. Matthew Sanders is director of the family and parenting support centre at the University of Queensland. Donna Cross is a professor of child and adolescent health at WA's Edith Cowan University. The day will bring the three experts together under the guidance of, Tony Jones. Tony is one of the ABC's most prestigious journalists.

### **Positive Schools Main Conference Day**

**Seven headline talks are presented on the main stage**, including addresses by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Steve Biddulph and Dan Haesler. Steve Biddulph is internationally known for his work on understanding childhood wellbeing. His books have sold over four million copies around the world. Dan Haesler is the proud recipient of the NSW Premier teacher's award.

**Nine interactive workshops** cover topics ranging from dealing with depression to building positive classroom behaviour. Our 2011 presenters include **Kidsmatter, Mind Matters, Beyond Blue, Rock and Water and the Game Factory**.

**For further information or Conference registration go to:  
[www.positiveschools.com.au](http://www.positiveschools.com.au) or email [info@positiveschools.com.au](mailto:info@positiveschools.com.au)**



## Diary Dates

### 2011 - International Year of Forests

**13th - 16th March 2011 11th National Rural Health Conference**

**URL:** [www.ruralhealth.org.au](http://www.ruralhealth.org.au)

**16th March 2011: ASD Conference**

"Emotion Management, Relationships, Healthy Sexuality for Individuals with Asperger's Syndrome" Featuring Dr Isabelle Hénault, clinical psychologist from the University of Québec, Montreal Canada.

**URL:** [www.pacificlutheran.qld.edu.au](http://www.pacificlutheran.qld.edu.au)

**Venue:** University of Sunshine Coast

**Would you consider making a donation to Self Help Queensland to help carry out its work?**

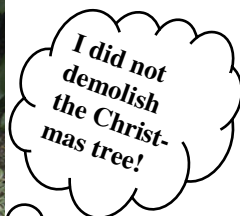
**Donations over \$2 are Tax Deductible**

**Self Help Queensland is an ATO registered Health Promotion Charity.**

**No longer want to receive printed telephone directories?**

Many of us now use the internet for finding telephone numbers. Residents and organisations can opt out of receiving white and yellow page phone books. You can cancel home deliveries online: [www.directoryselect.com.au/ds/](http://www.directoryselect.com.au/ds/) Organisations and businesses should call 1800 008 292.

### The Benefits of Owning a Dog (Continued!)



**\*Lotty is a loving companion to a young double transplant recipient**

## Important

**Please Put This Date in Your Diary Now!**

**Self Help and Support Groups Awareness Day**

**Thursday 8th September 2011**

**Let us know about your Conferences, Information Days, Seminars, Workshops, Celebrations etc and we'll do our best to let others know about them too!**

**Please contact Trish at the SHQ Office:**

**Ph: 3344 6919**

**Email: [selfhelp@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au)**

### Go Green - Read the Screen!

Are you willing to receive this newsletter by email rather than post? It would be a big cost saving to SHQ as well as the environment.

We are still happy to send it by post to small groups or individuals who do not have their own computer. Please let us know at 07 3344 6919 or email [selfhelp@gil.com.au](mailto:selfhelp@gil.com.au)

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter we would appreciate hearing from you also. Thank you

### Disclaimer

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of Self Help Qld

The material supplied is for information purposes only, and is not to be used for diagnosis/treatment, or as legal, tax, accounting or any other type of advice. Self Help Qld reserves the right to edit contributed articles.

SHQ's Policies and Procedures Manual is reviewed annually, and may be seen at the office by contacting 07 3344 6919.