

Newsletter of IDEAS



Time for Summer



IDEAS does
information
so you can
do life.

Disability Information
Free, Accurate & Independent



info@ideas.org.au



1800 029 904



www.ideas.org.au



[@disabilityinformation](https://www.facebook.com/disabilityinformation)



[@IDEASAU](https://twitter.com/IDEASAU)

I'M FREE
Take Me!



Editorial - *Diana Palmer* *IDEAS Executive Officer*

Welcome to this edition!

The last edition for this year is jam packed with summertime information as well as great ideas to assist with Christmas preparations.

As the edition goes to print, the IDEAS AGM has been held as a virtual event. We reflected on the last 12 months. The year has again been a year of change. IDEAS has stepped up to the mark each time and delivered the information people have needed through this year in addition to meeting obligations to partners such as ACCAN and Eastern Riverina Arts for funded ILC projects. If you would like a hard copy version of our Annual Report, please contact our Information team, otherwise you can access the online version at bit.ly/ideas-annual-report

Our Board have shown resilience and commitment to the challenges the organisation has been facing. The team at IDEAS have all stepped up in the last year and delivered where and when needed. In the last few weeks we have submitted a Tender response to operate the National Disability Gateway and are now waiting patiently for news of the outcome. The outcome of this tender will set the scene for our activities in 2021.

This year has also seen IDEAS engage in submissions to the Disability Royal Commission and the National Disability Strategy. Federal Budget announcements recently identified the roll out of the next National Disability Strategy (2020-2030) to be completed by the end of 2021. There will be further opportunities for feedback as the Government continue to undertake further consultations.

This year has been a year no one will forget. As we roll into the festive season, we hope that Christmas will bring some time for families to be with each other and have time to celebrate time together, sharing each others company. It has been a difficult year, let's hope the light at the end of the tunnel keeps growing.

Dive into this edition and look at some of the ways you can get out and enjoy some of the warmer weather and end of year activities. We will catch up again early in the new year.

Regards,
Diana

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Annual Report 2019-20

We provide disability information.
free | accurate | independent
IDEAS does information so you can do life.

Download: bit.ly/ideas-annual-report



Money Matters

The COVID crisis has had a massive impact on our economy. IDEAS have put together a series of articles to help you to manage your money in these challenging times.

Australia is officially in one of the biggest recessions it has ever faced with unemployment at an all-time high and many businesses closing their doors in the current financial climate. As the Government phases out emergency income support like the Coronavirus Supplement by the end of the year, people will find it harder than ever to make ends meet.

A recent survey from ACOSS found that 4 in 10 people on JobSeeker will have less than \$14 a day, after paying their rent. As 1.6 million people are facing extreme hardship, we know people with disability are over-represented in terms of living in poverty and low-income households.

The Money Matters series aims to point people to services and supports and to help people live within their means.

We get that this stuff is hard to navigate. If you need help finding a service or support in your area or want to find out more information about a payment or other financial help you may be eligible for, get in touch with us.

We are here Monday to Friday between 8am and 8pm.

Phone: 1800 029 904

Text: 0458 296 602

Email: info@ideas.org.au

Live Chat: www.ideas.org.au

Go to www.ideas.org.au/blogs/money



Mobile Pantries and Foodbanks



If you are struggling to afford food and necessities, for any reason, help is available. You are not alone. If you need an emergency meal, food relief, or ongoing support, these organisations can help you access support.

How can I find a food relief service near me?

There are both large and small organisations who can help you meet basic food needs in times of crisis. Some operate on a voucher system, others have food parcels, grow and share communities (who offer free food) community pantries or soup kitchens. Depending on the service, you may need to apply in advance, and some you can turn up to at nominated times.

Services with National Coverage

Below is a list of some of the service organisations in Australia. Your local council may also have further information on what help is available.

Ask Izzy

You can find places at their website askizzy.org.au by entering your postcode, town or suburb. For food look at the 2 columns 'Everyday Things' & 'Food'.

Australian Red Cross - 1800 733 276

Relief support for people on Temporary Visas. The application processing time at the time of publication of this article is 6 weeks.

Department of Social Services - 1300 653 227

Online National Service Directory on their website at serviceproviders.dss.gov.au You can search by postcode. Look under "Financial Crisis and Material Aid - Food relief". It comes under the Families and Communities Programme.

Food bank - 02 9887 4144

Pantry to the charities. State Capitals and the NT, including some regional centres.

OZ Harvest - 1800 108 006

A food rescue organisation that collects quality excess food from commercial outlets and deliver it to more than 1300 charities. Major centres in Sydney, Newcastle, Adelaide and Brisbane.

St Vincent De Paul - 1800 606 724

Programs and services. Call 13 18 12 and they will direct your call to the closest help. The Family Assistance Line is 1800 606 724.

The Salvation Army - 1300 371 288

For residents in the ACT, NSW and QLD, call the Assessment Line on 1300 371 288. It operates from 9:00am – 5:00pm Monday – Friday. They will assess your circumstances based on your needs and available resources. For NT, SA, TAS, VIC and WA call or visit your nearest Salvos.

Second Bite - 1800 263 283

A Food rescue organisation. Second bite redistributes surplus food to charities and non-profits around Australia. VIC, NSW, TAS, QLD and NT, with Community Connect available nationally.

Other places you can access supports

- City Missions
- Neighbourhood Centres
- Welfare officers at your Education Provider
- Religious Organisations
- Indigenous Support Organisations
- Local charities
- Your Education Provider
- Services for Multicultural Communities

Need a service near you?

Our Information Officers can help you find the closest service to you. We are a free service, and you can connect with us by calling **1800 029 904** or visiting **www.ideas.org.au**

Being a Good Neighbour



Asking in your head as you pull up in your driveway, or asking the people you live with, “Have you seen Doris lately?” may be a lifeline for your neighbour, especially if they are elderly or have a disability.

So, what does it mean being a good neighbour and where do you draw the line between “keeping an eye out” and intruding on your neighbour’s privacy?

Depending on the nature of your relationship with your neighbour, you might be able to arrange some sort of signal, such as a curtain drawn back by 8am to signal that Doris is awake and moving about. It could be saying hi as you each go and check the mailbox with a friendly exchange: “hopefully it’s a letter from the grandkids and not another bill”. Something unobtrusive but still sending a message that all’s well for the day.

You might read some sad stories in the news about people living alone who have died without anyone noticing. We as a community can look out for each other and stop this from happening.

Being a good neighbour doesn’t mean constantly visiting or prying into the business of others, as Anthony Barr says:

“A good neighbour is a fellow who smiles at you over the back fence, but doesn’t climb over it.”

Being a good neighbour means:

- Being respectful of others privacy and ways of living.
- Being friendly and helpful (a wave or nod of the head).
- Being prepared to assist if need be (short-notice childminding when running late from work).
- Maintaining property (neat lawn, absence of rubbish such as old car bodies).
- Letting others know of out of the ordinary situations such as a power outage or evacuation orders in cases of emergency and natural disasters.

Your neighbour might keep an eye on your place when you're away on holidays, as well as feed the pets or water the garden. You might repay the favour by doing the same in turn or with a jar of jam or a box of chocolates.

When “something is not right”...

The main thing to do is to look out for each other, and take note of your neighbour’s movements (or lack thereof) so if you notice something is not “quite right” you can get them the help they need. This may mean calling the police or if known, the service provider of the person if they are elderly or have a disability.

In most cases, it may just be that Doris has forgotten to open her curtain. If she answers the door, just explain why you knocked, and she’ll probably be quite happy that you cared enough to check on her. More often than not, all will be well. However, for the one case where a person is injured or needs help, your neighbourly concern may be lifesaving.

Imagining your own mum or dad in a similar situation might encourage you to do something if you ever have questions about the health or whereabouts of a neighbour. Better safe than sorry.



This is an abbreviated version.
To see the full article visit: www.ideas.org.au
 And search for 'Caring Communities - How to be a good neighbour'

Royal Commission Updates



The Disability Royal Commission has been exploring barriers to education for students with disability in a recent public hearing in Brisbane.

The **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability** (Disability Royal Commission) explored barriers experienced by students with disability in accessing and obtaining a safe, quality and inclusive school education and the resulting impacts on the life course of those students, and their families when these barriers prevent access to equal education.

Due to COVID-19, the hearing was not open to the public. A recording is available to watch or listen to on the Royal Commission's website. This hearing was held from Monday 12 October to Friday 16 October 2020.

The scope and purpose of the public hearing was to inquire into certain issues as they relate to the experiences of students with a disability, including:

- The impact on students with a disability of absences, suspensions, exclusions and expulsion from school.
- The re-engagement of students with a disability when they have experienced absences, suspensions, exclusions or expulsion from school.
- The provision of adjustments and supports, and the barriers to making reasonable adjustments and supports available, for students with disability.
- Individualised planning for students with disability.
- The use of restrictive practices on students with disability.
- Teacher training and qualification requirements for students with disability.
- The resulting impacts on the life course and mental health of students with a disability who have experienced barriers in education, including the transition to higher education and employment.

DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 517 199

 www.disability.royalcommission.gov.au

 IDEAS ID: 95338

The Aged Care Royal Commission (Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety) live streamed hearings 4 and 5 in Sydney on Monday 31 August to Wednesday 2 September 2020 and Monday 14 September to Tuesday 22 September 2020, respectively.

Hearing 4 focused on the key design issues for a new home care system and how to transition to a new system. Key features included:

- Employment and engagement arrangements for home care workers.
- Qualifications and training for home care workers.
- Safeguards for older people receiving care in their homes.
- Regulation of aged care services delivered to people in their homes and in the community.

Hearing 5 inquired into the financing and sustainability of future improvements to the aged care system, the appropriate funding model or models to support the delivery of aged care services and the prudential regulation of aged care providers.

The hearing will also inquire into:

- Whether there is a need to establish a specific financing mechanism to support government (and private) contributions to the aged care system, and if so, how this could be achieved.
- Whether sustainable high-quality care is best secured by funding from consolidated revenue or other models.
- Whether and how individuals should contribute to the cost of receiving aged care services.
- Whether the current system for determining the amounts of government subsidies paid to aged care providers is suitable for its purpose.
- Whether the funding available to providers under the current aged care system is sufficient to support the provision of high quality aged care.
- Whether, how, and by whom should the price of government subsidies and private fees for aged care services be determined.
- Whether the prudential regulation regime that applies to aged care providers is adequate or not to ensure the sustainability and stability of the aged care system.

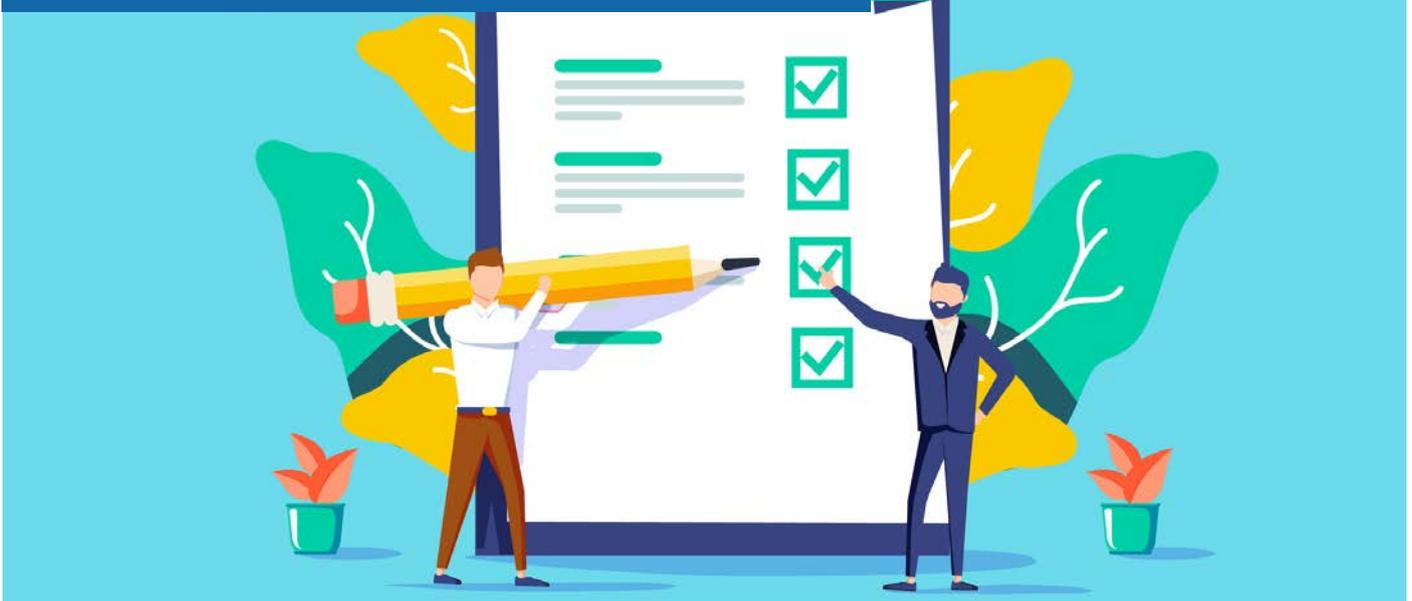
AGED CARE ROYAL COMMISSION CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 960 711

 www.agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au

 IDEAS ID: 95383

NDIS: Independent Assessments and the Functional Capacity Framework



In early September, the NDIA released a new Functional Capacity Assessment Framework in line with the Government’s response to the Tune Review.

The NDIA says that the Functional Capacity Assessment Framework means people with disability accessing the scheme will have free and fair access to the scheme. Disability activists however fear that the move to standardised tests is a cost-cutting measure.

“They will also be a cost-free, simpler and more equitable approach to ensure participants receive the supports and funding they need – part of a wide range of improvements we are making for a simpler, fairer and better NDIS.”

– NDIA CEO, Martin Hoffman.

Currently, people need to get reports from multiple health providers of their choosing to make an NDIS Access Request and cover any associated costs. NDIS-appointed healthcare professionals using standardised tools would conduct these new assessments.

However, what will these standardised tools look like? Will access to the scheme genuinely be easier, or become more prohibitive?

In a recent ruling by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), the independent body that makes rulings on Government decisions, the Tribunal found the NDIA’s use of an independent assessor was wrong (in the case of *Ray v NDIA*). In addition, that the type of therapist chosen to conduct the assessment by the NDIA was “not appropriately qualified”, and that the assessor’s understanding was mistaken.

The AAT found that despite the independent assessor's findings, the person with a disability was eligible for the NDIS and the evidence supplied by treating health professionals who had longstanding relationships with the person was more accurate and much more reliable than the single assessment paid for by the NDIS.

The announcement that the NDIA intends to refer all participants to a single independent assessor from next year is concerning for people with disability, their families, carers and advocates. In response to community concern, the NDIA has provided some questions and answers for more detail about this.

If you are concerned about the introduction of Independent Assessments, you should contact the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Stuart Robert MP.

Independent Assessment Framework: bit.ly/assessment-framework-link

Independent Assessment Q & A: bit.ly/assessment-questions

NDIS CONTACT DETAILS

 1800 800 110

 www.ndis.gov.au

 **IDEAS ID: 71366**

Information sourced from NDIS website.

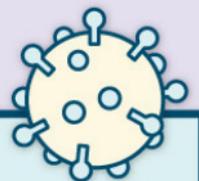


Australian Government



Disability Information Helpline

1800 643 787





Wide Angle Film Festival (WAFF) is a FREE film festival that reflects the lived experience of people with disability.

Prior to COVID-19, the festival would tour across NSW to cinemas, community centres and schools, presenting brand new Australian features and shorts with captions for people who are Deaf or have low hearing, and audio description, for people who are Blind or have low vision.

Access at the festival is also provided including increased wheelchair access and Auslan interpreters. Through the tour and school screenings, the festival aims to raise awareness and advocates for greater access in NSW and across Australia. All sessions are free to attend.

In response to COVID-19, WAFF Online has been launched. WAFF Public and WAFF Children's Public can be shared with everyone in the community. WAFF Corporate can be shared with off-site and on-site workers, to prepare fertile ground for culture change within organisations around disability.

The Public and Corporate Programs consist of award winning short films that reflect the lived experience of people with disability. The program is diverse culturally, diverse in the genre of films presented and in the experience of disability reflected. The Public Children's Program includes films made by children with disability and films including children with disability.

In this its 12th year, Wide Angle Film Festival will screen for an anticipated 60,000 people in schools, early learning centres, cinemas, community venues and businesses across Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland and Northern Territory.



This year, you can see all the films online. The festival includes a community and children's program.

The traditional versions of WAFF are still available and ready for the time when communities can come together again. In this form WAFF works well as a stand alone event and equally well as part of a hub of events.

People are encouraged to join the many organisations across Australia to share the rich lived experience of people with disability.

Organisations involved so far in WAFF Online include:

- Carpentaria Disability Services – Tiwi in NT
- Outback Arts Inc – Coonamble in NSW
- Moreland City Libraries – Coburg in VIC
- City of Parramatta (Riverside Theatres) – Parramatta in NSW
- Tallangatta Neighbourhood House – Tallangatta in VIC
- Stanthorpe Film Society Inc – Stanthorpe in QLD
- City of Fremantle – Fremantle in WA
- City of Cockburn – Cockburn in WA
- City of Rockingham – Rockingham in WA
- Yorke Peninsula Council – Maitland in SA

To register: bit.ly/waff-register

Once you register, you will be sent a link and an access password.

PRIMARY SCHOOL PROGRAM SCREENING INFORMATION

 bit.ly/waff-school-program

EARLY LEARNING CENTRE PROGRAM INFORMATION

 bit.ly/waff-early-learning-centre-program

For further information visit www.bardicstudio.com.au

Or contact Jacqueline Cosgrove at jacqueline@bardicstudio.com.au

 **IDEAS ID: 95520**



International Day for People with Disability 2020



Theme: “Not all Disabilities are Visible”

This is an annual occasion designed to come together to support people with disabilities in our communities.

As part of the celebrations on December 3, the 2020 theme “Not all Disabilities are Visible” will focus on heightening awareness and understanding of disabilities that aren’t obvious or visible. These include mental illness, chronic pain or fatigue, sight or hearing impairments, diabetes, brain injuries, neurological disorders, learning differences and cognitive dysfunctions.

From a report commissioned by the World Health Organisation (WHO) regarding Disability, 15% of the world’s population, or more than a billion people, live with a disability. As many as 450 million in this figure are living with a mental or neurological condition. The majority of these people will not seek professional medical assistance or advice, due largely to discrimination, stigma or neglect.

A couple of other facts offered by this report are that nearly 70 million people sustain Traumatic Brain Injuries each year and 1 in 160 children are identified as on the autism spectrum.

By not being apparent and visible people with these conditions face many barriers in their lives.



Isolation, disconnection, disrupted routines, diminished services and heightened anxiety have all become much more obvious during the COVID-19 pandemic. People with invisible disabilities have been greatly impacted as well and it is crucial that there is a clear awareness of their needs as the world continues to tackle the virus.

To find or register for events near you for December 3rd, go to www.idpwd.com.au

Due to COVID-19, some events may be held differently this year. They might be online or there might be social distancing rules and limits on attendees.

World Report on Disability: bit.ly/world-disability-report

DID YOU KNOW?



IDEAS is open from

8AM - 8PM AEDT

Monday to Friday



IDEAS Info Line: 1800 029 904



COVID Info Line: 1800 643 787



Livechat: www.ideas.org.au



Email: info@ideas.org.au



Rocky Road Recipe

Either as a gift or for a treat for the family rocky road always goes down well. The salted peanuts and ginger pieces are a good match although they can be substituted with broken pieces of plain biscuit, dried cranberries or currants.

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Setting time: 2 hours

This recipe makes about 20 pieces.

Ingredients

- 1 and 1/3 cups roughly chopped dark chocolate
- 1 and 1/3 cups roughly chopped white chocolate
- 1 cup marshmallows, cut into pieces with scissors
- 3/4 cup salted peanuts
- 1/2 cup crystallised ginger

1. Grease and line a 20cm square cake tin with baking paper. Melt the dark chocolate in a bowl over a saucepan of simmering water. Repeat the process for the white chocolate in a separate bowl.
2. Stir the marshmallows, peanut and ginger into the dark chocolate. Spoon this mixture into the tin and then swirl in the white chocolate by using a knife.
3. Place in the fridge to set for at least two hours. Once hardened, slice the rocky road into even pieces and package up in small bags or gift boxes. If the weather is warm store in the fridge.

Be aware that there are ingredients such as peanuts, suggested in this recipe, which may cause allergic reactions.





Christmas Lunches

A popular insert in the November December issue of the IDEAS newsletter is the list of Christmas Community lunches offered by local organisations in the city and regional centres and smaller country towns. They are, for some people, a social gathering to help with feelings of loneliness at a time when others are surrounded by family and friends. Christmas time and the New Year period is one of the loneliest times for many people. These feelings might be made worse by images of families enjoying the festive season together in the media.

Like so many other events in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertainty and change. A quick poll to organisations who normally host these lunches was unable to confirm if their events would go ahead when this newsletter went to print. One manager was disheartened by her organisation's inability to secure funding for day-to-day activities, and their Christmas lunch was not able to go ahead as a result.

Many people who participate in community lunches are people who are older or have a disability. Their health and well-being is important and some community organisations were unable to cater for the social-distancing rules in place.

For a lunch or dinner lasting even just an hour there is a lot to organise ahead of time. Ordering food, arranging for volunteers or working out transport for those who need it, all need to be started many months ahead of time. Nevermind the cost for the food and possible waste if an event doesn't go ahead.

Watch this space and keep an eye out in your local newspaper or on your local social media/bulletin board for any notices. Listen to your local radio community announcements or ask your support worker for any news.

We will do our best to find events that do go ahead and will publish any we find closer to Christmas on our website.
Go to www.ideas.org.au/events or contact us on **1800 029 904**.

Vehicle Safety



If you are planning a road trip to friends and family or a beach getaway and your vehicle hasn't been in use very much this year, we have some checks and tips to do before you set off.

Make sure the car is turned off and in park or first gear, with the handbrake on before starting any checks.

Check and top up **fluids** if needed, including:

1

- Oil
- Brake fluid
- Windscreen washer fluid

2

While checking under the hood, **inspect hoses** for any cracks or damage.

3

Check **wiper blades**. Gently wipe the rubber with a damp towel or clean damp rag to remove any dirt or other substance.

4

Check all **lights and indicators** are in working order. Arrange repairs or bulbs to fix any that are not working.

5

Your vehicle handbook will tell you the suggested **tyre pressures**, or where to find a panel with the tyre pressures on it. Panels can be in the passenger or driver side door or printed inside the glove box compartment. Your local service station should have a tyre pressure gauge. Don't forget to check the condition and pressure of your spare tyre.

6

If your car is taking more time to start than it used to, or if your car **battery** hasn't been changed in a long time, a battery charger can improve the battery. If it is badly damaged, contact your Roadside Assistance Provider, or your local mechanic.

7

When you turn the vehicle on, note any **warning lights** that stay on and action if necessary.

8

Check that **seatbelts** retract correctly.

9

Check the **air-conditioning** is functioning.

10

Check the operation of **wheelchair lifts, ramps and hoists** contact your vehicle dealer or modifier for repair, maintenance and servicing. Be familiar with backup operation in case of a breakdown.

11

Check operation of **swivel seats**. Contact your vehicle dealer or modifier for repair, maintenance and servicing.

12

Confirm that the **tyre jack and tools** are stored in the vehicle.

13

Pack a small first aid kit, torch, hi-visibility vest, toilet paper, drinking water, hat, sunscreen and insect repellent in case of **emergency**.

If you are concerned at all with the safety of your car, it is always best to contact your local mechanic who can inspect the vehicle and offer you peace of mind before going on a road trip.

Concession Cards



The Seniors Card and the Seniors Savers Card in **NSW** are two worthwhile ways to save a bit of money or access a special offer. They can be used for shopping, going to a movie, having a meal or getting the car checked. Every citizen who is 60 years of age and over, and a permanent resident of NSW is eligible for one of the two cards.

What is the difference between the two cards?

Seniors Card

This is the original card first introduced in 1992, which offers discounts at a wide range of businesses. Participants can also access the Gold Opal Card and transport concessions created to assist people who are fully or mostly retired live healthier, happier, more active and affordable lives. To be eligible seniors need to be working 20 hours or less per week in paid employment (averaged over 12 months).

Senior Savers Card

This card offers the same business discounts to seniors who are still working after age 60, and not yet eligible for the Seniors Card. To be eligible seniors need to be still working more than 20 hours a week in paid employment (averaged over 12 months) and be aged 60 years or older.

Eligibility and Fees

Eligibility is not means tested and there is no fee for applying for a Senior Savers Card or a Seniors Card. When retiring completely or starting to work less, Senior Savers Card holders can convert to the Seniors Card with the full government transport concessions for retirees.

 bit.ly/nsw-seniors-concession-cards

In **QLD** there is one process for applying for a Seniors Card, Seniors Card +go or Seniors Business Discount Card, and up to five QLD Government Concessions

These concessions include:

- Saving up to \$400 on energy per year
- Saving up to \$120 on water per year
- Saving up to \$200 on rates per year
- Saving up to 50% on car registration per year

 www.seniors-concessions.services.qld.gov.au

Seniors Online **Victoria** is the place to go to apply for a Seniors Card. It encourages older Victorians to keep active and more involved in the community by offering incentives that make it more affordable to get out and about. Free or concession public transport and discounts from businesses are examples of these incentives.

There are no fees or application charges and the process for applying for a card is relatively fast.

 www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/seniors-card

South Australian seniors Card members receive a range of benefits including public transport concessions and access to specially discounted goods and services around the state.

A Seniors Card doubles as a Seniors Metrocard, the electronic ticket used on Adelaide's buses, trams and trains.

 www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/seniors/seniors-card

Contact IDEAS if you would like information about a concession card system in your state or territory.

Summer Fun



Here are some free, and almost free, activities for your summer. We suggest how to find free groups or activities in your local area. Or you can contact IDEAS, and we can do the searching for you. Please check official event pages or confirm with the organisers that the events are still going ahead and can meet your accessibility needs under any COVID-19 regulations.

Always consider your personal safety when meeting new people and agreeing to meet. Take a trusted friend along and keep someone you know notified of your movements.

The Heart Foundation Walking Groups

Have over 1,200 walking groups across Australia. Search for a group near you, register with your details, contact your walk organiser then meet your group and start walking. You can see how often the group meets, how long they walk for and the pace they like. Walks note if they are pram friendly and dog friendly. If you are online, you can search the www.walking.heartfoundation.org.au/walking website. Or if you don't have internet or a computer, you can call IDEAS, and we can do the searching for you.

Active Kids and Creative Kids Vouchers in NSW

These vouchers give you access to sporting groups and clubs. Activities like Mountain Biking, Tennis, Arts classes, Languages, Drama, Dance, Cricket, AFL, Basketball and Netball can qualify for example. We can help make the search easy and save you time, call us with your needs and we can do the rest. To find out if you are eligible for the vouchers, see www.service.nsw.gov.au

Men's or Hen's Shed

These sheds have become known as a valuable way to learn new skills from experienced hands. Social connections bridging age gaps can bring meaning to all members. You can also support local projects and give back to your community. Some groups may charge a small fee.

Libraries

Libraries are for more than books and they are usually free! As well as having collections like audio-books and large print titles, as a meeting place, or service, you will be surprised what they provide. For example, your library might have:

- Book clubs
- Board games
- Movie clubs (Bankstown)
- Computing skills
- Auslan story times
- Children's story times
- Special interest talks
- Online events

What's On?

Sydney - [whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](https://www.whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au) Search for free activities. Anything from exhibitions, sport and fitness, shopping, markets and fairs, talks, courses and workshops, to theatre and the arts, or tours and experiences. In the "more" tab, you can choose accessibility features such as audio descriptions, Hearing Loops, Closed Captions, Mobility Access, and Sign Language.

Melbourne - [whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/search/free](https://www.whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/search/free) cover all things Melbourne. Search by "free activities" and keywords such as "inclusive". Activities like eBook Valets, Virtual Museums, Live Streams, Library Events are yours for the choosing.

NSW National Parks - Worthy Mentions

A Companion Card may be issued to people with significant and permanent disability so that their carer can access tours and attractions in NSW national parks – free of charge. Companion Cards do not provide free entry for carers or vehicles if the cardholder is not present. Website: www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

Community, Cultural or Religious Groups

Run activities from time to time from School Holiday Programs to activities nights, youth groups, teen groups, for example.

Rotary, Probus, View, CWA, Lions could be looking for members. Seek out information on your local groups to see if they fit with your ideals.

Join a Community Garden or Neighbourhood or Cultural Centres.

Playgroups Australia

Offer both virtual playgroups, playgroups at home and preparing to return to playgroup sessions. Website: www.playgroupaustralia.org.au

Gig Buddies Sydney – Fees Apply - NDIS registered

This opportunity gives you a chance to go out to see bands, live sports, bushwalking, art galleries, clubbing, or meeting friends with the support of a Gig Buddy. You are paired with a buddy based on similar interests, location and age. Your buddy will go to events with you once or twice a month for a year. Gig Buddies NDIS support can fit into Category 1 Capacity Building Social and Community Participation or Category 2 Core Supports Assistance with Social and Community Participation. Both the buddy and volunteer pay for their own tickets (or choose free events) and any travel costs; eligible gig buddies can take advantage of the NSW Companion Card, which allows the participant's volunteer to attend select events free of charge. Volunteers undergo police checks and reference checks.

Website: www.gigbuddiessydney.org

Riding for the Disabled – Fees Apply

RDA has equestrian activities with trained volunteer helpers and accredited coaches. Activities like structured riding classes, recreational riding, carriage driving, depending on the club. Website: www.rda.org.au

Disabled Surfers Association of Australia – Fees Apply

As the weather warms, and restrictions ease, DSAA Clubs may be reopening. Support and coaching for former surfers, or beginners. Membership fees may apply, depending on the club. Website: www.disabledsurfers.org

Sailability and Para Sailing – Fees Apply

Sailing opportunities for everyone. Some clubs have “Come and Try” Days. Depending on the Club there may be a membership fee or a sailing fee.

Website: www.discoversailing.org.au/sailability

Special Interest Clubs

Photography, Fishing, Knitting, Art, Dancing, Pottery, Gardening, Family History Groups, Choirs, Local Drama Productions, Scrabble, Chess or Boardgames, Geocaching, Mountain Biking or Baking, you might be surprised at the groups available to you.

What are you waiting for? Take some time to discover something new, meet new people, create memories and enjoy the summer.

Accessible Swimwear



Practical swimwear designs for comfort and discreetness are available no matter your needs. For example, did you know that swimwear designs include adaptability or practicality in the form of:

- Slip-on or wrap around swimsuits that are easy to put on.
- Swimsuits for people with burns who need to avoid sun exposure.
- Swimsuits or shorts for bowel and bladder incontinence available in sizes for children, youth and adults.
- Leakproof swimwear that is odour fighting and protects pelvic floor mishaps or spotting or light periods.
- Reusable swimwear briefs for incontinence.
- Floatation swimwear.
- Variations in fastenings from magnetic, velcro, studs or zips.
- Swim fins for below knee amputees to aid swim stroke.
- Ruched designs that help hide ostomy bags.
- Specialist swimwear for ostomates.
- Ostomy swim wraps and bands.
- Mastectomy swimwear that keeps or hold prosthetics in place.

And there are protectors for ears – to keep ears dry and water-free. Known as ear bands, they can help keep earplugs in place and are available for babies through to adult sizes.

IDEAS can help you find a supplier of swimsuits that meets the needs you have, get in touch with us today.

Personal Alarms



Personal or medical alarms, whether worn as a necklace or bracelet can make calling for help much quicker and easier. There is a variety of models available so the best way to choose one maybe by asking around to friends or relatives to see what works for them. Reviews in topical magazines or newspapers also provide pros and cons of different ones.

IDEAS has a number of links relating to personal safety alarms. Contact us for more details of personal alarms and safety devices.

Telecross – Australian Red Cross

Red Cross has a welfare telephone call service called Telecross, where each morning a volunteer makes a quick phone call to ensure the person is okay. This provides peace of mind if someone is at risk of an accident or illness which may go unnoticed. A classic example is if someone falls and is unable to call for assistance. Moreover, what is better than having a friendly voice to wake up to and be interested in how you are each day?

Telecross services are available in the Hunter, Wollongong, Blacktown/Western Sydney, Murray Riverina and Tweed Heads region of NSW. Contact IDEAS for details of other locations in Australia.

ARE YOU BUSHFIRE READY?

myfireplan.com.au

Bush Fire Information Line

1800 679 737

Fires Near Me - download the app

Stay On-Time!

Utilise your NDIS funding to help you stay on-time with important medicines and personal care tasks.



Blister Pack Medicine Timers

Countdown Timers

Electronic Pill Boxes

Vibrating Watches

Vibrating Door Bells

Vibrating Clocks

Automatic Pill Dispensers

Talking Watches

Talking Clocks & Orientation Clocks



Contact TabTimer and we will help you stay on-time with Assistive Technology.
visit: www.TabTimer.com.au or call: 1300 TAB TIMER (1300 822 846)

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IDEAS 4th Annual General Meeting

For the safety of our members during the COVID crisis, we decided to hold the IDEAS 4th Annual General Meeting online. This allowed more people than ever to attend. IDEAS prides itself on hosting accessible and inclusive events and the 2020 IDEAS AGM was no exception. The webinar, hosted by Redback, included live captions for speakers and closed captions for all pre-recorded audio-visual content.

Barbel Winter, Managing Director of Futures Upfront was our Master of Ceremonies (MC) and guided our audience and speakers through the new format with wit and grace.

Chair of the IDEAS Board, Martin Heng welcomed members and made his report to members, speaking about the ongoing commitment IDEAS has shown to supporting people with disability throughout both the Black Summer bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also heard the Treasurer's report from **Chris Dumas** and the Executive Officer's report from **Diana Palmer** discussing the activities we have carried out, such as running the National COVID-19 Disability Information Helpline on behalf of the Department of Social Services and a submission to the Disability Royal Commission.

For more information about IDEAS activities, read our Annual Report. A copy can be made available on request or it can be downloaded from our website (see page 3).

A highlight of the event were three short films introducing our customer Adam and his dog Sasha, our Information Officer Margot, and the IDEAS Executive Officer Diana Palmer.

All three films are available on the IDEAS website and social media channels with both closed captions and audio descriptions available.

 Go to bit.ly/meetIDEAS

What's On: Key Events in November - December

2 Nov to 10 Nov - NDIS Housing Options Workshop | QLD

Online event

Contact: bit.ly/ndis-housing-options-workshop

17 Nov - Healthy Bladder: Learn simple tips for improved bladder control

Online event

Website: bit.ly/healthy-bladder-register

18 Nov - Palliative Care for Health Professionals Working within Disability Services

Seminar Room, Cancer Council WA, 15 Bedbrook Place, Shenton Park, WA 6008

Website: bit.ly/palliative-care-event

30 Nov to 4 Dec - Pathways15 Online: Advancing Inclusion in 2020 & Beyond

Online event

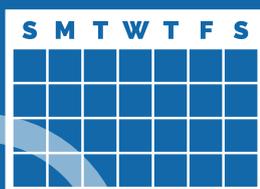
Website: www.atend.com.au/pathways-conference

8th Dec - Social Skills for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

Online event

Website: www.asid.asn.au/events/863_social_skills_for_adults

As the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve, events may be subject to change or cancellation. Please refer to the relevant website or contact details to confirm if an event is still proceeding before planning to attend.



To find more events in your area, visit the IDEAS Website and browse the **Events Calendar**

www.ideas.org.au/events



**Leave us a
Google and
Facebook review**



**Disability Infoline
1800 029 904**

Text: 0458 296 602 - LiveChat: www.ideas.org.au

Disability Information
Free, Accurate & Independent

IDEAS is a free telephone information service for people with disability, their family, carers and other supporters.

Ask us the questions, we give you the answers and you make the decisions.

IDEAS accepts selected advertisements and articles for the Newsletter of IDEAS, although this does not provide an endorsement of these actual services or products. You should always consult with a health professional before making a decision based on your individual needs. IDEAS gratefully acknowledges funding from the Australian Government Department of Social Services, and the New South Wales Government Department of Communities and Justice.