

Dear Families,

During the past weeks, with the passing of Norm our Service Manager, many of us have drawn on the strength of the Compass 'family'. There have been tears and laughter in shared memories, trainees supporting trainers and each other and families sharing kindnesses and offers of help, not only to us, but also to Norm's family. We thank you all.

As in all strong families, we are pulling together and keeping Norm's legacy vibrant. We often ask 'What would Norm have thought of that?' as new ideas and activities are woven into the Compass day.

We know Norm is applauding the appointment of Rob Glover as Manager at Compass Caloundra. Congratulations to Rob who has been the long-time backbone of his centre.

In other developments the Wabi Sabi shop is attracting admiration from all, the Harvest Kitchen's mouthwatering aromas are driving us a little crazy with hunger, the Green Thumbs' herb garden is overflowing and Sarah's contract team Lawns and Windows, is keeping Palmwoods and Nambour tidy and sparkling. Great work everyone.

Compass was nominated for the Inclusive Community Champions Awards by Sunshine Coast Council for the work we do to make the community more inclusive for people with disabilities. It is a wonderful recognition for our organisation. Rob with his team Michael, Anthony and Kobie proudly walked off with the award at Caloundra Regional Gallery, on our behalf.

The Awards Night was an amazing evening. There were not many dry eyes at one point but mostly a mountain of smiles throughout the night. Also I don't think I have seen that dance floor ROCK as much as it did on Saturday, the trainees just took the place over. Thanks to Wendy, David and Amy who worked so hard to make it a night to remember. Congratulations to our champions, Keryn Michell the Palmwoods Manager, deservedly taking out the inaugural Norm Armstrong staff member of the year as Trainer of the Year and Erin Hastings (Palmwoods – Trainee Achievement Award) and Brian James (Caloundra – Trainee Outstanding Effort Award) both smiling all the way home clutching their trophies.

So in amongst all this activity, end of term is fast approaching in what has been quite an extraordinary year. Looking back, we have to thank you our families for your priceless support through the joys, troubles, changes and triumphs.

Kind regards  
Sally Ryhanen  
(Acting Service Manager)



Compass is Proudly Sponsored by.....



**Date Claimers**

25th – 29th November 2013  
Wabi Sabi Opening Week

12th December 2013  
CET Break up day

13th December 2013  
Staff Day

16th December-13th January  
Compass Christmas Break

13th January 2014  
Compass Reconnences





The contract team did their annual clean of the Nambour museum



Working hard on the Farm Stream

All groups work as a team to clear around the stream. We can now see the trees growing not the weeds and long grass .



Farm Team Working on the grounds at WABI SABI



**Continuous Improvement Plan**

At Compass we are committed to ongoing service improvement. If you have a suggestion about how we can improve our service, please write your suggestion on one of our **Service Improvement Suggestion Forms**

available from the office, our centres or our website: [www.compassinc.org.au](http://www.compassinc.org.au) and we will consider every idea.

**Advocacy**

Remember that you are able to bring along an advocate or support person to any meeting that you have with Compass.

An advocate is someone who is there to support you or represent you and your interests in circumstances where you feel that this additional support is required.

Please ask us if you need more information or assistance with organising for an advocate.

**COMPASS CALENDAR**

Need to check dates for the holidays or a special event?

Our Annual Planner Calendar is available 24/7 at

[www.compassinc.org.au](http://www.compassinc.org.au)



# From David's Desk



Dear parents and friends,

Awards Night - The Compass Gala Awards Night was a great way to begin to draw the year to a close. It was fantastic to see a full house once again with some 200 people in attendance. Thank you all for coming along. Thank you also to all those responsible for the organising of the event and of course to our major sponsor Heritage Bank Palmwoods Community Branch whose generous support allowed us to subsidise all trainee costs and provide such great awards. Mask Events again supplied all the chair covers, table settings and décor at no cost and The Pelican Waters Resort waived the hire fee for the Grand Ballroom once more – all of which added up to a wonderful event. It was really good to see other Compass sponsors there again including Russel and Jane from Coast Life Homes and Howard and Mary from Bunnings Caloundra. Personally I want to thank Mavis and Tony Armstrong – it took a lot for Mavis to attend on Saturday night especially to present the inaugural Norm Armstrong Medal to the Compass Staff member of the year. I mention again that while Keryn Michelle was an excellent choice, there are truly many other dedicated and professional staff who would also have been worthy recipients. I offer my personal congratulations to each and every one of them for another great year.

This year was also a first for the young people and families from Gympie and Caboolture – thank you for travelling that little bit further to be a part of the event and I hope you now feel even more a part of the Compass family. 2013 has been a big year with the development of these two new centres and I look forward to the opportunity to take that special brand of what we do to more young people in those communities in the years ahead.

Housing Solutions - For those of you who attended the meeting several months ago where we talked about the future housing needs of Compass families, unfortunately our application to the Queensland Government to purchase a training facility for Independent Living was unsuccessful. In many ways this was not unexpected so I have decided to take it further through slightly different channels. Several weeks ago I had a meeting with the Attorney General, Jarrod Bleijie, where I presented a submission on the concept. This was very well received and he has passed it on to a special sub-committee under the Treasurer, Tim Nicholls, with a letter of support and a recommendation for me to address the Treasurer and members of the committee in the near future. He recognised that this is an important initiative and that the government needs sustainable solutions so I remain hopeful. I will keep you informed of our progress.

Compass 2014 & Beyond – What will next year bring? Compass is never going to change its focus from providing a developmental pathway for young people with disabilities. As these young men and women complete their secondary education, they need & deserve further opportunities to grow and learn more about themselves, their community and their place in the world. The kind of opportunities that people **who don't have disabilities take for granted. The best way to provide this pathway is through a combination of values and outcome based** further education and training where each individual can transition at their own pace in a centre with others of a similar age. Why does it need to be in a centre? Because that is what is normal & mainstream – **young people who don't have disabilities can attend TAFE, Colleges and Universities where they not only learn... but also make lifelong friendships, develop social habits and skills, and are supported by their peers.**

Gradually the number of trainees who have transitioned to training units and then vocational outcomes has grown to a point where now approximately a third of our enrolments are focused on vocational participation through the Farm, Nursery, Kitchen, Shop or Lawn and garden enterprise. There are still many young people whose needs lie less in work opportunities and more in personal development and **therapeutic outcomes, and we will always remain committed to providing that support... because the simple fact is this is also** developmental in nature. To manage behaviours, to improve the capacity for personal care, to be a little fitter and more health conscious, to be more confident in social situations, to be able to access recreational opportunities, to be a little less dependent on mums and dads, to improve speech or communication – **these are all learning... and that's what I am personally committed to. And that's what Compass stands for.**

**We don't believe that having one support worker take one young person out to do a bit of shopping, go to a couple of appointments, have a coffee and participate in a little recreation is the best way for a young person to develop the skills they need to live in their community.** Applying the average funding package to that model will also mean the person will receive approximately 6 -8 hours support a week. What happens the remainder of the week? Over time though, we are providing service to people who are a little older and who may not have such a strong interest in work related activities. We have been working hard on creating a menu of flexible community participation and enrichment programmes that retain a developmental focus (not just filling in the time or babysitting) and we can see more of our people transitioning over to those activities in the next decade. We will be prepared for that.

NDIS - To do all of the above requires good staff / trainee ratios. It needs to be personal, it needs to be planned, it needs to be assessed and it needs to be celebrated. My hope is that under the NDIS (Disability Care Australia) the funding becomes equalised across the States and Territories meaning greater funding per individual here in Queensland. That would allow us to slowly extend our service hours while still doing the job to which we are committed. Currently in the various launch sites around Australia we have seen instead that pressure has been brought onto providers (through enforced lower pricing for various services) to cut the costs of various programmes to the people accessing the service. Talk about cheek – for any government department to be accusing an NGO of not efficiently using its funds is the very height of hypocrisy! We all know that if you want to see waste of public funds you only have to stroll through any local, State or Federal **department or agency. And there is my real fear... that again our taxes, that could and should be provided to people and families for direct service delivery from an NGO, will be chewed up by another wasteful (this time Federal government) agency.** Now we have a change in **government at a federal level it will also be interesting to see how much commitment remains to the NDIS concept... I guess time will tell.**

Thank you – Thank you all again for your support. It's been a big year with Norm's passing, our expansion into other communities, opening Wabi Sabi and Harvest Kitchen and so much more. I found myself standing at the back on Awards Night just taking in the scene – so many people enjoying such a great occasion – **and I felt like pinching myself. I was proud of the young people, many of whom I've known for a decade now, and proud of all the people I work alongside each day.** I hope we all get to share many more important milestones together. Meanwhile please accept my best wishes for the coming holidays. I hope you and yours enjoy the time together and look forward to seeing everyone safely back again in the New Year.