

Newsletter: February 2013

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Dear Compass Trainees, Staff, Families and Friends

Welcome back to what has already started out as an exciting and action packed year. This year we welcome three new trainees to our Caloundra Centre, one new trainee at Palmwoods and four new trainees at our new Gympie Centre. We are currently also responding to enquiries this week from another five young people interested in joining Compass this year.

New Gympie staff Lyn and Stuart with three of our new trainees, Melanie, Jake and Liam outside the



Along with our new trainees, we welcome our two new staff, Stuart and Lyn to our Gympie Centre. Stuart and Lyn both have extensive experience working alongside and supporting people with disabilities. Stuart, who has been appointed to the role of Team Manager, has previously worked for Compass in our very early days and it is great to have him back on the team.

We also welcome Madi onto our permanent staff at Palmwoods this year. Madi worked all of last year in relief positions in each of our centres.

As a result of increasing enrolments we now have staff vacancies at both our Palmwoods and Caloundra centres that we will be filling permanently in the coming weeks. Staffing at the various centres this year is as follows:

**Compass Farm**—Andrew (Team Manager), John, Sarah and Amber, along with Chris (Farm Manager) and Sean (Farm Hand).

**Palmwoods**—Keryn (Team Manager), Lisa W, Kay, Rose, Madi and a new staff member to be appointed. Emma and Carla running the 2 day program.

**Caloundra**—Sharon (Team Manager), Sally, Lisa C, Rob, Michelle, Emma, Carla and a new staff member to be appointed. Rose and Rob sharing the 2



## Date Claimers

**Thursday 28th March 2013**  
Break up Day

**Friday 29th March 2013**  
Good Friday

**Monday 1st April 2013**  
Easter Monday

**Thursday 25th April 2013**  
ANZAC Day

**Monday 29th April 2013**  
Market Week Prep

**Monday 6th May 2013**  
Labour Day

**Thursday 9th May 2013**  
Market Day

**Monday 12th May 2013**  
Mothers Day

**Friday 17th May 2013**  
Gympie Show

We also welcome Chanae to the Administrative Assistant position based at the Palmwoods Office. Chanae will be working there full time and replaces Lachlan who left at the end of last year. Lachlan left to pursue his studies and to undertake work aligned with his studies, and we wish him every success in the future.

Long time Compass staff member Ross, who has been off on leave recovering from an injury, will be taking some additional time off this year to concentrate on getting back to full health and functionality. We wish Ross all the best and hope that he is fit and back on deck real soon.

Thank you to all of the trainees and their families who let us know when a trainee will be absent for the day or for a longer period of time. This really helps our staff with their planning, but more importantly it alleviates our concerns when we know that a trainee is travelling some or all of the way to Compass on their own and they haven't arrived in the morning. The best number to call on is our Head Office number—5445 9116, and we can pass on the message to the centre and staff member concerned for you. To help your son or daughter with increasing their independence, consider letting them leave the message if this is at all possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone about our service hours and programs. Compass has highly structured and timetabled programs and every aspect of our day has a purpose and function. Our day starts at 9:00 am and concludes at 3:30 pm. The last half hour of the day is dedicated to clean up and each trainee has specific tasks to perform during that time. It is also the time when staff are required to write in the communication books and debrief trainees prior to the end of the day. We understand that families are very busy and cannot always make these pick up and drop off times. Many parents call us to let us know if they are running late or will be leaving early, and this is a real assistance for staff in planning their day to ensure that they do not leave a trainee behind when going out, or that arrangements can be made for an early departure if the team is out and about. If you do arrive a bit early to pick up your trainee, and you don't need to leave immediately, it would be greatly appreciated by the staff if you could wait in the waiting area to allow the program to run its course and the trainees can then all be dismissed at 3:30. While this may only seem a minor detail, it is very important that we minimise the disruptions to our trainees and our programs, particularly at the end of a busy day, so thanks for your cooperation with this.

Thank you also to all of the parents and carers who participated in their son or daughter's Progress Plan review meetings last year. Progress Plans are reviewed twice yearly and are a great opportunity to sit down with families for half an hour and review the great progress that has been made, as well as identify some new goals to be worked on or to modify current goals in light of the progress already made. Having families involved in this process is vital for us, as while we know our trainees well, families know them so much better and this is a great opportunity for you and us to discuss any issues you have, and to come up with a plan together that can be implemented by us and supported by yourselves that will give your son or daughter the very best opportunity for success. Team Managers at each centre will be contacting you at around the time of each Trainee's plan review date to make a time to discuss this with you. Thank you for your ongoing commitment and support of this very important process.

By now you will have received your Yearly Planner Calendar and your Schedule for the quarter. These are very important documents to keep in a safe place where you and your son or daughter can refer to in order to plan your week and your year in advance. Many of our trainees and their families find these both invaluable tools when planning out their week as it provides the high level of structure and predictability we all need when arranging our busy lives.

Thank you to all families for getting your uniform orders and payment in by the due date. The orders have been sent off and we anticipate that it won't be too long before they are back. The Farm Team have started looking at an alternative work uniform for the farm based trainees that will be cost effective, offer more protection, and be better suited to trainees when working predominately outside. We will let you know more in the near future.

As our organisation continues to grow at a significant rate each year, we are very conscious of the need to maintain the personal touch we have always had and loved having with our families. This flows all the way through from your Key Worker, to your Team Manager, to Service Manager and Management Team, CEO and the Board. We see the partnerships we all share as vital elements in helping us do our best for our Trainees. Our motto this year is



Are you keen to accomplish something big this year?  
Please contact the office to register your interest

## CoastLife Homes Raffle



Here's David Dangerfield presenting Chris Rawlins from Sunshine Coast Mitre 10 with the signed Broncos jersey he won from the raffle arranged by Coastlife Homes.

The raffle raised \$450 which was a great effort from the Coastlife team.

## We do more with less

At the beginning of this semester the Caloundra Team showed exactly how they can '...do more with less'.

Led safely and energetically by Mr Fix-it Rob, the team worked incredibly hard to get their centre just one step closer the 'dream' they have held for so long.

Rob dismantled large internal structures at the end of the building to make way eventually for trainee personal storage space and much needed art/craft/trainee washing areas. Trainees spent time admiring and learning about their vegetable and herb garden outside, waiting for the dust to settle then every man donned safety gloves and tossed out all the debris in no time, filling a large skip bin.

Staff were amazed at the agility, care, enthusiasm and dedication shown by every trainee to 'get the job done'. Who needs outside help when you have the Caloundra Team?

## 2007 Renault Kangoo RUK.436 FOR SALE

approx. 43,000 kms,

Registered until June 2013

Seats four + wheelchair

Very Good condition,

Roadworthy certified

\$35,000 ONO

ring Bruce 0407626519



# Meet Thelma and Louise



If you haven't been out to the farm since Christmas you might be in for a surprise. We have two new members of the farm team Thelma and Louise. They are very friendly and always willing to meet and greet new people. When they see you they will always say something. If you haven't guessed ... yes they are two female sheep !!

# Thank You!

A Special Thanks to Marls and Ken of Australian Garage Supermarket for supplying and delivering materials to re-roof the chook pen on the Compass Farm.



## Keeping it Personal...

When the Compass education & training service first opened its doors in 2003 I didn't imagine just how popular our programmes would be OR how quickly we'd grow. What I **did** have in mind was a clear model of what best practice could be in a post school service for young people with disabilities...A pathway of further education, skills based training and vocational opportunities through to a purposeful & happy life.

This genuinely developmental and transitional approach takes a great deal of work behind the scenes to maintain, but it's the missing link in service provision in this field. The other thing I was sure of was the nature of the relationship between the young people who access the service and Compass. This can be best captured in one word – family.

I don't have a corporate mind where I can see the young person as a customer or client – from that first day of service I treated the three young people the only way I knew how – as members of my own family. This wasn't as strange as it might seem. I have my own children and fifteen years of running martial arts classes for young people alongside school programmes for literally thousands of school kids meant I was very used to having an extended family – what was three more? Now those three have become seventy but nothing has changed except we also have about 30 co-parents (or staff) who help manage and contribute to that big family.

At Compass we've recently had our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we've decided that our theme for the next 10 years and beyond is going to be "Keeping it Personal..." because I think this is something we all appreciate. Knowing that we can share the responsibilities for leading a good life inside a family where our dreams and goals can come true. That's our promise to you... we'll keep on keeping it personal. I hope to see you at Compass one day.

David

### 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



Hi all,

Happy New Year and welcome back! I hope to see all of you over the next month or so as we get back into the swing of things in 2013.

There are a couple of bits of news this year. First is the opening of a new Compass centre in Gympie. There are two new staff (Stuart and Lyn) who will be managing things and providing service to young people and families in that area. We have found a great venue that we will be able to develop over the next few years into a special place for that community.

Next is the continuing renovations at Compass Caloundra. Painting was done over the holidays and floor coverings will be going in at the end of this month. There will be wheeled partitions, office area, some new furniture, kitchen upgrade, a meeting room, fencing and security lighting. Even the bus will have safe storage on site. Rob and his crew have been doing an absolutely fantastic job down there!

The Farm shed has its new kitchen and is now being occupied by the team members out there... and the whole Farm has never looked better. Thanks to Farm Manager Chris and the whole team. (Chris has made an incredible effort out there on his own a lot of the time over the break so give him a big pat on the shoulder when you next see him!) Maybe also do a rain dance for him when you're there!

Compass Palmwoods will also get an upgrade to the kitchen early this year and a little helping hand with the back garden. The covered areas are getting plenty of use which is great to see.

Also you will hear a new voice on the phone when you call the Palmwoods office as we welcome Chanae Ellis who takes over from Lachlan as administrative assistant. Chanae is quiet... but very keen to meet you all, so please say Hi when you call.

Amy has recently totalled the register for 2012 of donations, grants, fundraising, discounts and goods and services received by Compass over the year. We really started to put some effort into this in 2011 and generated \$90,000 of value in that first year. In 2012 we have exceeded \$170,000 value which is both very pleasing and indicative of the generosity of our community and our corporate partners. Given the financial climate here on the Sunshine Coast over those two years it is also a great effort. Next month Amy will complete her university degrees in Psychology and in Business. She has studied for 5 years while working here in the office and we will be putting her education to use in a business development role to further grow the areas of fundraising, grants and corporate partnerships.

I'm sure you've all been following developments with the NDIS over the past few months. Queensland has finally agreed to support its introduction however I'm very concerned about the level of preparedness in Government to comprehensively design and properly manage / administer such an important scheme. There is still no agreement on how funding will even be made available to the recipients. What most people agree on is that there have been negative experiences in southern states that indicate how NOT to do it that look like being ignored here in Queensland. How often does this happen?... too often unfortunately. Various organisations are putting in submissions to the government and we can only hope that these help inform the NDIS make up.

David

