

RESPITE HOUSE
&
RECREATION AND HOLIDAY PROGRAM
2011/2012

Dear families, parents, carers and clients, as you may recall, over the past 2 years we have been keeping you informed about our requirement to move away from the previous model of carers seeking respite for their sons and daughters. In the past, respite was provided in a very flexible manner and changes are required to ensure our funding is sufficient to provide a cost effective and sustainable respite service. The aim is to offer a selection of weekend respite and school holiday weeks but of course respite can be used in a variety of manners on those selected days, for a few hours on a Saturday while mum does some shopping or for a whole day or even overnight. Historically, respite has often been seen as an overnight service but we are able to cater for your specific needs and requirements and ensure that respite suits your needs. The set dates will provide respite nearly every second weekend of the year and during selected school holidays.

The additional benefit of offering set respite times, it the opportunity to utilise Respite House for more recreational activities and to cater for specific gender and ages (e.g. sleepover for girls, footy/BBQ nights for the boys etc.). We have been liaising with Disability Services (formerly Disability SA) to ensure that families have the opportunity to seek further information from the main parties involved. Of course, all requests for emergency respite will still be assessed and supported to the best of our abilities. We would like to encourage you to spend some time in reviewing the dates specified below and to select the most suitable dates and times.

We are pleased to inform you that after discussions with our Board, the decision has been made to remain with our current access fees for Respite House, which are set at \$ 2 per hour. We are acutely aware of the current difficulties many families face with the ever increasing cost of living and we are able to discuss fee payments and arrangements with families. The reasons for the access fee is basically to offset some of the cost we carry and are not funded for, rent, electricity, food, maintenance, furniture and equipment and the like. We are happy

to discuss your needs with you and have access to additional funding services that may be able to assist.

We have furthermore changed the way in which we have previously allocated families 'Respite Units'. Feedback received indicated that it was often difficult for families to know how much respite that would equate to and we have thus decided to simplify the system and allocate 'Respite Hours' which will allow for a clear knowledge of what has been allocated and what is still available. 1 Respite Hour will essentially be 1 hour of service.

We have also made the same transition with our Recreation/Holiday program and will allocate hours rather than units to streamline the whole process for all parties involved. Again, 1 Recreation/Holiday Hour will equate to 1 hour of service.

As always, please feel free to contact our Office on 8582 3110 or Disability Services on 8582 2400 to ask further questions or enquire about the Respite Hours balance. For any bookings of Respite, please contact our Office on the above number. You will shortly receive a letter with your allocation of Respite Hours and Recreation/Holiday Hours and we have based the allocation on usage of said services over the past 2 years, so you will receive the same allocation as last year and of course there is scope to increase that allocation.

In regard to the Holiday program and in particular the School Holiday programs, we are aware that the suspension of the most recent holiday program caused some disappointment amongst parents and we would like to apologize for that. We have reviewed all our previous programs and have identified the best attended programs, including the Wave pool in Mildura, movie at the Chaffey Theatre, Destiny's Farm (Animal Park) to name a few. We have and will continue to ensure that most activities are wheel chair accessible and encourage all parents, families and service providers to provide us with feedback and suggestions. The forthcoming activities, programs and holiday trips for the second half of 2012 will be mailed out in June. As mentioned above, we aim to include programs that offer variety, fun and experiences to all participants.

If you would like to discuss anything further, please feel free to have a chat with either Trish Lacey, Coordinator Recreation/Holiday program or Deb Lambert, Coordinator Respite/Brokerage services on 8582 3110. They will be more than happy to answer any and all of your queries.

Find attached the list of dates and times for the set dates for Respite at Respite House for the duration of 1/7/2011 to the 30/6/2012 for your information. We will also list the dates for all our services on our pending website and this will allow for electronic access to all our information, programs and dates. The website address will be www.riverlandrespite.org.au.

RESPITE DATES FOR
RESPITE SERVICES AT RESPITE HOUSE
2011/2012

Weekend Respite availability (commences at 3pm Friday and finishes 8:30am Monday)
Transport arrangement can be made (pick up and drop off)

12 – 15 August 2011
2 – 5 September 2011
23 – 26 September 2011
28 – 31 October 2011
18 – 21 November 2011
2 – 5 December 2011
16 – 19 December 2011
10 – 13 February 2012
2 – 5 March 2012
23 – 26 March 2012
4 – 7 May 2012
25 – 28 May 2012
15 – 18 June 2012

School Holiday Weeklong Respite availability (commences at 9am Monday and finishes 9am the concluding Monday)
Transport arrangements can be made (pick and drop off)

11 – 18 July 2011
3 – 10 October 2011
9 – 23 January 2012
9 – 16 April 2012

Respite can be booked for some hours, a day, overnight or even a whole weekend if required. Please contact us for your respite needs as places are limited. All our staff is trained in all aspects of care and we ensure that all respite users are matched by gender, age and specific support requirements. We are more than happy to show you around Respite House so you can inspect the house yourself.

For any queries or bookings please call 8582 3110

WEBSITE

We are pleased to announce the launch of our new Website which contains a whole lot of information that we hope will be informative and useful for our clients, families and the broader community. Please feel browse the website and let us know what you think. The address is www.riverlandrespite.org.au and we also have our own Facebook account to which a link has been made. We will continually update the site with information about programs, activities but also the Newsletters and other fliers.

FRIDGE MAGNET

You will find a Fridge Magnet enclosed with this Newsletter and we trust you may find it useful to stick relevant documents on your fridge. You will see that the colours and general layout of our logo has been streamlined and hope you like the new look.

REFURBISHMENT OF RESPITE HOUSE

We are in the process of refurbishing Respite House and are aiming at updating some of the older furniture and to add some colour, brightness and fun to the décor of Respite House. As you can imagine, to undertake such tasks is quite expensive but we are committed to ensure that any surplus funds goes back into our services or the local community. We are intending to hold an Open Day for Respite House once the refurbishment has been completed and will keep you informed.

SCHOLARSHIP FOR LOCAL STUDENT

In another first, RRRSI Inc. has decided to support the local Community Services sector in the Riverland and we thus established a 'Riverland Community Services Vocational Scholarship', aimed at assisting a local person with payment of study fees and material costs. We are pleased to work with the Special School and Business SA, as well as other partners to make this happen and Jake Chappell from Waikerie has been selected as the worthy recipient of the Scholarship. Jake will undertake a Certificate III in Disability with the Riverland Special School and we are proud to be associated with the project and Jake! You may also come across some media coverage for the story.

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

I thought I keep you posted on the developments of the scheme, which aims to bring some real change to the way in which the disability system currently operates. The system is in crisis and the possible introduction of the scheme, which would allocate a determined amount of funds to the individual, rather than individuals having to compete with a small bucket of funds and a vast number of individuals seeking funds out of that bucket. The scheme would aim to raise an additional \$ 6 billion and this would most likely be done by raising the Medicare levy by a small margin. The scheme would be administered federally, with state offices and is offering a great opportunity to finally achieve some long overdue and required change. You can obtain more information at www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au. We have included a brief factsheet for your information.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

As you may have heard over the past few months, we have commenced with the first plantings of the garden and are busy in setting up additional aspects of the garden. For example, Glossop High School is constructing a Gazebo for us, we are in the process of completing raised garden beds but of course are still encouraging service providers, agencies and individuals to come along and join in this exciting venture that offers great opportunities to make new connections, contribute to a free local resource, shape the garden's future and much more. We meet every Saturday morning at this stage at the garden site, Old Sturt Highway Berri, next to Church site on the left hand side heading towards Glossop. Please feel free to contact us for any further information and of course, we have photos on our website so check them out.

As always, please feel free to get in touch with us, should you have any questions, queries, feedback or suggestions. We would love to hear from you. Lastly, just to remind you that we still continue with the development of the Community Garden site in Berri and if you or someone you know is interested in coming along, we would be thrilled to see more people turn up.

Kind regards

The Team at RRRSI Inc.