

January 31<sup>st</sup> 2011



**Introduction:** Hello readers! Happy New Year to you all! We hope you had a safe and enjoyable festive season and managed to have some time off for R&R! Welcome to our first newsletter for this year.

**Soapbox:** In our journeys across the State and into many and varied organisations, there is one consistent issue that is brought up on every occasion – negative attitudes towards people with a disability. Not an easy issue to remedy I concede, however with patience and determination I believe attitudes can change and are already changing slowly. I also believe that people generally don't *knowingly* discriminate or mean to offend, they just don't know, what *they don't know* and the fear of the unknown is the trigger for misguided attitudes! We have found that after a session of **Disability Awareness Training**, things can change rapidly and people are happy to look at things from a different point of view.

So our theme for this month is about **awareness raising** in several different areas and a snapshot of types of training we provide. We won't be promoting any other programs or initiatives this month (everyone's been quiet, really!). So "Yes", this newsletter is a blatant marketing email and a summary of our services and training packages for a change! If we haven't highlighted something that you may require, don't hesitate to ask – we are very flexible and can tailor something to suit.

Since the inception of DWE, we have provided professional services and training across the whole State of Victoria, which continues to evolve. Some of the innovative strategies we are currently developing are groundbreaking areas in that they are the very first of their kind to be implemented by Councils. These include a 'Scooter Policy' that I am writing for the Mornington Peninsula Shire. The benefits of this Policy are 'holistic' and broad reaching with a potential ripple effect throughout the community effecting health and wellbeing, trading, tourism and much more. A 'Scooter Policy' sounds simple enough in essence but the benefits of several strategically planned and coordinated initiatives will provide a more equitable and accessible community for all.

I am also writing a 'Pre-School Field Officers' Framework and set of Guidelines for the Wyndham City Council. I will also be writing an advocacy document which will be the Council's policy position statement on the program. These are exciting projects which have given me the opportunity to showcase my comprehensive professional writing skills.

We have developed many varied **workshops and training packages** to assist organisations. These include:

- Specifically tailored Disability Awareness Training
- Multi Cultural Awareness Training
- How to write your own Disability Action Plan workshop
- 'Simple English' and 'Print Disability' workshop
- Adaptable housing information
- Workshops for advisory committees which include:
  - 'Good Governance'
  - 'How to be more influential'

We also provide training in **Organisational Development** which includes:

- 'Active Service Model' training for HACC workers
- 'Assertiveness' Training
- 'Effective Communication'
- Mentoring and Leadership
- Developing a 'Customer Service Charter'
- Strategic planning
- 'Giving and receiving feedback'
- Myers Briggs Type Indicator training and team building.

Other **Projects** where we can assist you may include:

- Writing and reviewing of Disability Action Plans
- Help with setting up a scooter recharge system
- Community Consultations
- Surveys - Development, collation and reporting findings
- Facilitating the development and printing of Mobility Maps
- Accessible Events Guide
- Publications - managing design, formatting, proof reading and printing
- 'Tradie's Guide' update to comply with the new AS-1428 standards
- Disability Services Directory.

As our work calendar is rapidly filling up for 2011, I would suggest if you need assistance that you lock in your dates in with us sooner than later.

We have organised and facilitated many events, workshops, expos, community consultations, public launches and forums over the years. Although my expertise lies mainly within the disability sector, I bring broader experience from working with Government agencies, community groups and provide strong leadership, self empowerment and mentoring skills and also being in business in the private sector.

### **Testimonials from clients or workshop participants:**

#### **Disability Awareness training:**

*"Deb Whitecross was absolutely fantastic. The presentation was bright and colourful, easy to understand and the examples provided were most relevant to the topic. She was open, honest, fun and very approachable with a very positive attitude."*

*"Excellent presentation, funny, relaxed and full of good information."*

*"Facilitation was fantastic. Deb even made the dry Legislation interesting."*

#### **Writing DAPs:**

*"From start to finish in the development of our **Access and Inclusion Plan**, Deb was extremely professional in her approach. Obviously with the vast background in this field that Deb has we knew we had chosen our consultant perfectly. Deb challenged us to put everything into the development of the Plan and guided us through the process. End result, we have a fantastic result and we cannot thank Deb Whitecross Enterprises enough for challenging us to "raise the bar" in relation to this important legislative requirement. Thank you Deb and Greg you were a pleasure to work with."*

## **Andrew Thomson RuralAccess Worker, Shire of Campaspe**

### **Writing your own 'Disability Action Plan' workshop:**

*"Great presentation. Very informative and thought provoking."*

*"Deb is very knowledgeable in her field and well experienced. I recommend her for training on Disability Action Plans."*

### **Effective communication workshop:**

*"I found Deb to be the most positive, informative and uplifting person. I enjoyed the workshop and could have listened to her for hours more."*

### **Accessible Events Guide:**

*"It was great to work with Deb and Greg on the **Accessible Events Guide**. We have received a lot of great feedback on the project. We look forward to working together again in the future."*

## **Stephen Bell MetroAccess Worker City of Whittlesea**

### **HACC Conference Halls Gap:**

*"Deb's enthusiasm and dynamic personality is infectious. Her knowledge of the disability and health sector is impressive and adds insight and depth to her facilitation skills. She is cool under pressure, able to think on her feet and improvise when necessary. The filler items such as Speed Networking, the **Disability Quiz** and **Assertiveness training** were clear favourites amongst conference participants and could have been whole sessions unto themselves."*

## **Cathy Faull HACC Conference Organiser**

### **Monash Disability Forum**

*"Deb's experience, understanding and knowledge of issues relevant to people with a disability, enabled her to MC the 2009 Monash Disability Forum with great confidence, sensitivity and insightfulness. Deb engaged and communicated with the speakers and the audience with great ease, enthusiasm, respectfulness and a sense of humour. I highly recommend Deb without hesitation."*

## **Eugenia Grammatikakis, Forum Organiser, Monash City Council**

*"What a great job you did hosting the Annual Forum for the City of Monash on Tuesday at the Novotel Hotel in Glen Waverley. It would have been an organisers nightmare when one speaker did not turn up on time - let alone two - you handled the situation with flair and got the show on the road. Your sense of calm and humour got the job done. Thanks for a good, useful and informative meeting."*

## **David and Vicki Brown, West Promotions Pty Ltd**

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