

## **NATHAN'S GOT THE WHEELS IN MOTION**

Novita client Nathan Arkley is one young man who sure likes collecting gold – and we don't mean of the jewellery type!

Nathan is a paralympian in the making and has had great success in track competitions over the last few years, winning a bucket load of gold medals at various wheelchair sports events. Track is his specialty, with a preference for sprints where he took home eight gold medals in the 2006 season. An impressive effort considering it was his first year of serious competition!

The 12-year-old's sporting prowess doesn't end there, with tennis, swimming, volleyball, cricket, shooting and table tennis all filling his weekly calendar. Hard to believe he manages to fit school into the schedule...

Nathan's mum Lisa encourages his efforts by taking an active role in his development, even stepping into the shoes of track coach. Training takes place at Santos Stadium, with the Linear Park trail in Dernancourt also proving a great spot for speeding along the Torrens.

Nathan lives with a spinal cord injury as a result of transverse myelitis, a virus in his spinal cord, and has a specially customised track chair where his legs tuck up underneath his body, improving his aerodynamics and allowing him to reach great speed. Wheelchair Sports SA provided the chair and have invited Nathan to development camps and given advice with his training regime.

Nathan's success has also seen him receive preselection for the Paralympics, which involves training with a development squad in preparation for representing his country in a few years. He has attended national meets in Canberra and Sydney, has met Paralympic track star Louise Savage and even received a \$500 Telstra grant to help in his development. Now that's what we call commitment!

Keep an ear out for the name Nathan Arkley in years to come... he's one of many Novita champions really reaching for the stars!

## **MITCHELL MAKES A GREAT EASTER BUNNY!**

One of Novita's incredible kids went above and beyond recently, baking and selling his own hot cross buns to raise money for Novita!

As part of a Salisbury High School Year 10 project, Novita client Mitchell Ferris was required to make and sell a product, with profits going to his charity of choice. With Easter fast approaching, Mitchell had the great idea of selling hot cross buns

Mitchell makes a great Easter Bunny! to his schoolmates and neighbours. He negotiated with his big sister to help out at her Bakers Delight store in Salisbury, and soon found himself pulling on an apron and up to his eyeballs in dough!

Mitchell spent hours baking, then delivering delicious hot cross buns to his loyal customers – raising an impressive \$150 for Novita along the way. Who knew that eating hot cross buns could be such a tasty way to support our kids?!

Government funding boost to benefit South Aussie kids

The State Government has announced an extra \$2.37 million in funding for Novita Children's Services, giving hundreds of kids living with disabilities plenty to smile about!

The additional funding was announced by Minister for Disability, Jay Weatherill, as part of a multi-million dollar investment in South Australia's disability sector. The funds will allow Novita to provide hundreds of children with much-needed specialist equipment like wheelchairs, walking frames and communications devices.

Novita's Chief Executive, Glenn Rappensberg, says the funding is an investment in our children's futures, and will be a welcome relief for many of the families involved with Novita.

'Much of the equipment these children need to make life easier is just too expensive for families to afford without assistance from Novita and the State Government, with motorised wheelchairs costing more than \$14,000 and communications devices setting families back up to \$20,000 each,' he says.

'But as the demand for funded equipment grows, so does our waiting list. The State Government's generous funding injection will go a long way towards ensuring Novita's kids have the equipment they need for mobility, independence and participation in the community.'

Mr Rappensberg says the new State budget reflects an ongoing commitment by the State Government to improve the lives of people living with disabilities.

Novita is now working with the State Government to determine exactly how the funding will be used, and looks forward to ordering this much-needed equipment as soon as possible. More information will be available to families soon, so stay tuned to Nexus in the coming months.

## **NINE NOVITA STARS ARE CELEBRATED FOR THEIR COURAGE!**

Nine of our own little stars were recently nominated by their Novita therapists for the Lions Children of Courage Awards, which celebrate the bravery and determination of South Australian children living with disabilities.

While Novita's nominees weren't selected as the individual winners in their categories, their incredible courage was celebrated with a special afternoon tea at Government House, where they were each presented with a certificate by the Governor herself Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson.

Novita nominees included:

Tamika Coudrey (SRO)

Daniel Millowick (NRO)

Cody Stevenson (NRO)

Libby Clark (NRO)

Kaitlyn Handley (NRO)

Jack Butler (SERO)

David Jackson (SRO)

Travis Starr (NRO)

Mark Doust (NWRO)

## **GOVERNMENT GRANT WILL HELP GET NOVITA'S KIDS MOVING!**

Novita has been selected alongside 36 other disability organisations to share in a \$500,000 State Government funding boost to help South Aussies living with disabilities to 'get active'.

Novita has received a \$30,000 grant through the new Inclusive Recreation Inclusive Sport (IRIS) program, which aims to provide recreation, sport and physical activity opportunities for people living with disabilities. Novita's grant will fund ConnectABILITY, a new pilot program to help children with physical disabilities access community-based sport and recreation activities.

Novita's Director of Client Programs, Wendy Wake-Dyster, says sport and recreation plays a vital role in every child's development, however a lack of support and understanding of disability-related issues means Novita's children often miss out.

'Currently, many children with physical disabilities are unable to participate safely in community-organised recreation activities, meaning they miss opportunities to develop vital life skills and can be left feeling quite isolated,' she says.

'ConnectABILITY will provide a specialised and supportive 'linkup' service between children with disabilities and community sporting groups, helping to break down these barriers and open doors to a range of new recreation and sporting possibilities for these kids.'

The program will see Novita's expert staff working side-by-side with children, families, sporting groups and volunteers, providing advice on appropriate strategies

and activities and helping to create a safe, supportive environment where children with disabilities can 'have a go'.

*ConnectABILITY is currently in the planning stages, with the first trials expected to take place in early 2008. More information on the program will be available in the coming months.*

### **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT – FINAL REPORT NOW AVAILABLE**

For several months, Novita has been involved in a Training and Development Project funded by the Government of South Australia. This project aimed to assist health services to meet the needs of children with disabilities, by developing disability awareness resources for use by a variety of health services to increase confidence and knowledge about the children, their parents and carers.

After extensive research a final report has been prepared and can now be downloaded from the Novita website. Hard copies can also be supplied upon request.

This comprehensive analysis would not have been possible without the very generous assistance of almost 120 parents and carers and 50 potential users of disability awareness resources, who took the time to fill in the questionnaire and attend focus groups and interviews.

The Project Advisory Group encourages the use of information contained in the report (with appropriate references) in any way that supports the needs of children and young people with disabilities and their parents and carers.

To read the final report, visit Novita's website at [www.novita.org.au](http://www.novita.org.au) or contact Meredith Frogley on (08) 8243 8206.

### **TREVOR THE TRAIN DRIVER COLOURING IN WINNER!**

Congratulations go to twelve-year-old Reece for winning the colouring-in competition in the June edition of Nexus.

Keep an eye out for the postman Reece, some great prizes will be heading your way soon!

Don't forget, the Nexus competitions are open to everyone. It doesn't matter if you're a client, sibling, cousin or friend, you're more than welcome to put in an entry. After all, you've got to be in it to win it!

## **SPEECH PATHOLOGY WEEK 2007**

Most people have had experience with a little choking episode - be it an unexpected bone in your dinner, or something going down the 'wrong way' and causing a few coughs. But for some people this can happen every meal time, and it can be pretty scary.

Running from 22-28 July, this year's Speech Pathology Week theme is Feeding and swallowing: it's no choking matter. Speech pathologists are the key professionals who work with individuals with feeding and swallowing difficulties and can provide information and ideas to support safe and enjoyable meal times for children, parents and carers alike. Speech pathologists also work closely with other professionals like physiotherapists, occupational therapists, paediatricians and dieticians to get the best results for each individual client.

An exciting part of Speech Pathology Week is the announcement of the annual 'book of the year' prizes in the categories of Young Children, Lower Primary and Upper Primary. Last year's winners were Annie's Chair, The Postman's Dog and Naked Bunyip Dancing. Keep an eye on Novita's Toy and Resource Centre for the 2007 winners!

For more information about speech pathology at Novita, contact your regional office or visit [www.novita.org.au](http://www.novita.org.au). The Speech Pathology Australia Website, [www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au](http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au), also has valuable information about speech pathology and Speech Pathology Week 2007.

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CARER ADJUSTMENT PAYMENT**

The Carer Adjustment Payment (CAP) is an interim ex gratia payment scheme that the Government of Australia is offering while a wide-ranging review of Carer Payment (child) is being conducted.

The CAP is intended to assist families to adjust following a catastrophic event where a young child (aged 0-6) is diagnosed with a severe injury or serious illness. The CAP is a one-off, non-taxable payment available to families in exceptional circumstances. The maximum amount available to any family is \$10,000.

### **Who is eligible?**

Families will be able to apply for assistance through the CAP where following a catastrophic event:

- the child, aged 0-6 years, is diagnosed with a severe illness or major disability due to accidental injury
- the child has significant care requirements (ie requires full-time care from the carer for a minimum of two months following the incident)
- the child's carer qualifies for Carer Allowance in respect of the child
- the carer is not eligible for Carer Payment
- the carer or their partner is not eligible for an income support payment

- the carer is able to demonstrate a very strong need for financial support during the adjustment period immediately after the catastrophic event.

### **Making a case**

Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis by an independent panel of experts. Families will need to present their case by setting out their circumstances, and the ways in which the family's life has been disrupted that result in them needing extra support. This may include disruptions to things like the carers capacity to work and/or care arrangements for other children in the family. Guidelines are currently being prepared to assist families with their application.

### **More information**

To register your interest in applying for the CAP, or find out more about eligibility, visit your local Centrelink office, telephone 13 27 17 or visit [www.facsia.gov.au/carers](http://www.facsia.gov.au/carers).

Article taken from the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs website, [www.facsia.gov.au/carers](http://www.facsia.gov.au/carers).

### **LACHLAN'S LUCKY LOTTERY**

Novita physio Carol Maher certainly has a big-hearted little nephew. Enterprising eight-year-old Lachlan recently decided he'd like to raise some money for Novita – and set up his very own lottery to do so!

Lachlan's fantastic prizes included a painted plaster ornament and a cushion he had made with help from his Aunty Carol, plus a bulging bag of juicy mandarins. Tickets were sold to his family for 50 cents each (or three tickets for \$2!), with Lachlan raising a grand total of \$25 to help Novita's kids. Now that's what we call community spirit!

### **PROGRAMS PROJECT UPDATE**

A Welcome Program

The new Client Services Structure was described in the April Programs Project update. To read more about this new structure, please visit Novita website at [www.novita.org.au/programsproject](http://www.novita.org.au/programsproject).

Parents have told us that one of the most difficult moves for families is their entry into Novita services. It can be overwhelming, as it often comes at the same time as learning that their child has a disability. The new Client Services Structure identifies a 'Welcome Program' that will be provided to families when they join Novita, and when they move from one Novita service area into another.

The development of the Welcome Program highlights the importance of orientating a family to Novita's services and systems, and the time that should be taken to understand a child and family's needs to best plan which services are required.

Ideally, the Welcome Program will take place over a number of weeks and will include:

- providing clear and relevant information to families on a number of topics

- a visit from an 'experienced' Novita parent
- listening to parents in order to understand what is most important to their family at that time
- the necessary administrative tasks, such as gaining consents
- getting to know the child in order to understand their needs and Programs Project update therefore plan services
- introducing the family's Key Worker
- deciding on the team who will provide the child and family's services
- starting the services that address the most urgent needs
- developing the first service plan.

The work group that will develop the Welcome Program concept will have completed their work by the end of August.

To comment on the idea of a Welcome Program or on the Programs Project overall, contact Terry Lyons, Project Manager, on (08) 8243 8250 or email [terry.lyons@novita.org.au](mailto:terry.lyons@novita.org.au) or [programsproject@novita.org.au](mailto:programsproject@novita.org.au)

### **NOVITA DADS CATCH BILLY CART FEVER**

On Friday 16 June, a group of Novita dads, staff and kids braved the slopes of the Oaklands Driver Education Centre (opposite the Marion Pool) to give billy carting a go.

Many of the brightly-painted billy carts had been constructed with great pride by the dads. Most of these sterling pieces of workmanship were created using cast-off wheels donated by NovitaTech and timber donated by Dubsky Timber in Burton, and were all ridden with much pride by the kids (and the dads who had a go!). One ingenious

Novita dads catch billy cart fever little machine even had seats for three children, all cut out of plastic packing crates (see below)!

Special thanks go to the Eastern District Venturers, a Scout troop that loaned Novita an additional four billy carts to make the day extra special.

### **WANT TO SEE THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM?**

Matt Damon is back in his starring role of Jason Bourne in the Bourne Ultimatum, the third movie in the Bourne series.

Novita's Burnside Auxiliary is offering a fantastic night of intrigue, suspense and espionage where all proceeds support Novita... don't miss your chance to be a part of the action!

**Where:** Chelsea Cinema

Kensington Road

Marryatville

**When:** Sunday 12 August

**Time:** Film commences at 5pm

**Author:** Novita.Marketing

Page 7 of 12

**Date Created:** 11/07/07 **Last Review Date:** 11/07/07 **Last Modified Date:** 07/01/2008

**Cost:** \$20 per ticket

including free raffle ticket, a drink and nibbles to enjoy during the movie.

For more information, contact Lorna Riddle on 8243 8223.

### **TUTTI CELEBRATES 10 YEARS**

Tutti Ensemble, a world-first choir for people of all abilities, was formed in Adelaide in 1997 as a small singing group that allowed people with disabilities to live out their dreams through music and performance.

One of the programs offered, Tutti Arts, is a week-long work program that caters for young adults with a range of disabilities who are interested in pursuing visual and performing arts as a vocational option. These young people have shown extraordinary talent, which has emerged through careful nurturing and absolute dedication from those who train, teach and direct them.

Tutti Ensemble performed in the Adelaide Fringe Festival in March 2007, and much acclaim was given to them in subsequent reviews.

Pat Rix, a composer, playwright and the Founder and Artistic Director of Tutti Inc SA says that Tutti has grown into a vital and thriving arts community, involving more than 200 South Australians each week.

‘Over two thirds of Tutti performers identify with a disability and in keeping with the philosophy of “no barriers”, the company has spent 10 years performing and collaborating with artists from all over the world.’

To celebrate their 10th birthday this year, Tutti Ensemble will be showcased in a celebration concert and art exhibition on Wednesday 8 August at the Adelaide Town Hall.

Commencing at 8pm and broadcast live on ABC radio, Tutti will be joined by accomplished blind singers Michele Thredgold and Declan Lorenzin, SA favourites Jennifer Kneale, Brian Gilbertson, Catherine Campbell, country singer John O’Dea and acapella quartet Heaven Knows. Fabulous musicians accompanying the Tutti choir include Nerissa Pearce, Jorge Papanaooum, the Zephyr String Quartet and world-class blind blues guitarist, Chris Finnen.

The evening will be compered by Peter Goers and Pat Rix, with an official Kaurna welcome by Leonie Brodie.

For more information or to book your seats, contact Linda Jacobssen on 0402 317 035 or email [cinqfive@internode.on.net](mailto:cinqfive@internode.on.net).

## **MEMO FROM EQUIPMENT SERVICES**

Each month, the Equipment Services team provides guidelines to help Novita clients look after their loaned equipment. This month's topic is returning equipment parts and accessories.

Many items of equipment provided to our clients have removable parts and accessories, which allow flexibility and adjustments in the ongoing use of the equipment. These include foot rests, harnesses, electric cables, pommels, battery chargers, head rests and in some cases, cushions.

It would be appreciated if all of these components could be kept together, so they are all returned to the Novita store when the item is no longer needed or the end of the loan period has arrived. This ensures the equipment can be re-issued to another family, with all of the components available for use.

When components are not returned, we need to use our much-needed funding to replace the missing parts. So by keeping track of parts and accessories and returning all components, you will be helping us to make the best use of our available funding.

If you have questions about any item of loan equipment, please speak to your therapist or call the Equipment Services team on

8243 8302.

## **TAKING OUR SUPPORT TO THE LIMESTONE COAST**

In June, Novita's Psychology Department took their well-practiced set of country family workshops down south to Mt Gambier.

Thirteen mums and dads attended Shared Journeys, which focused on grief and loss for parents of children with disabilities. Seventeen parents attended Oh Behave!, a workshop on behavior management methods, while 12 siblings came to Siblings Too, a support workshop for siblings. Finally 12 children attended Gold Star Thinking, which taught a method of problem solving to children.

A group of foster parents working with Anglican Community Care also attended the workshops and expressed their appreciation for the information, and the chance to meet other families facing similar challenges. Several of the attending families made fast friends, and are planning to catch up after the workshops.

Special thanks go to Jane Turner, Principal of the Mt Gambier North Primary School, who allowed the team to make extensive use of the school spaces, electricity and audio-visual equipment at no cost. Novita's country workshops have consistently attracted plenty of interest, and in addition to Mt Gambier have also been presented in Pt Augusta, Berri and Pt Lincoln.

## **SIBWORKS IS UP AND RUNNING!**

Are you the sibling of someone with special needs? Do you want to have some fun and meet some fantastic new friends? Then SibworkS want to hear from you!

SibworkS is a place where you can come and share with other siblings of kids with special needs. Siblings Australia will be running SibworkS groups after school throughout Term 3 and will have plenty of fun, food and friends for you to enjoy. At

this stage, there will be one program running for 8-12 year olds at Fullarton Park Community Centre, starting on Tuesday 21 August. The program will run for 6 weeks (every Tuesday at 4-6pm), which coincides with the last six weeks of Term 3.

The program was developed and written by Kate Strohm (Executive Director, Siblings Australia) and Dr Monique Nesa (Curtin University, WA). Both authors have had a long history working in sibling support and the program grew out of their combined experiences.

SibworkS are hoping to run more programs all over Adelaide in 2008, both for 8-12 year olds and for teens, so if you are unable to make it to this group please call and register your details for programs next year. The amount and frequency of these programs will depend on funding and donations.

There are limited places available for this program, so if you are interested or know someone who is, please call the SibworkS office on 8361 8361.

### **OUR GIRLS GET CRAFTY**

Seven aspiring artists and their parents gathered in the Regency Park Theatre last month to create a masterpiece on canvas for the combined Bingo hall/ Regency Park School gym.

The gaggle of girls, who are all supported by Novita's Acquired Brain Injury team, began the day with some 'get to know each other' games before settling in for a presentation by Tamra from The Body Shop. Tamra spoke about the importance of self confidence, looking after yourself (and each other!) and not feeling pressured by images seen in advertising or on TV.

After the presentation, the girls alternated between painting their canvas, enjoying relaxing hand massages from Tamra and tucking into a delicious pizza dinner.

Many thanks to The Body Shop for their generous contribution to the evening – the girls are hoping for many more chances to get together in the future!

Keep an eye on Nexus to see the other spectacular canvasses painted by different Novita groups including Wombats, Little Sparkles, MD Mafia, the Toy and Resource Centre's April Antics group and also one from the Regency Park School.

The canvasses all look fantastic, and will no doubt brighten the hall used by Novita's bingo patrons and the Regency Park School kids once they're all hanging up together.

## **NEXUS PUBLICATION DETAILS**

Want fast, easy and direct access to our publications online?

Check out [www.novita.org.au/nexus](http://www.novita.org.au/nexus) or [www.novita.org.au/novitanews](http://www.novita.org.au/novitanews) to download electronic versions of Novita's latest newsletters

### **Novita Children's Services Incorporated**

Regency Park Centre

171 Days Road

Regency Park SA 5010

PO Box 2438

Regency Park SA 5942

T 8243 8243

F 8243 8208

E [enquiries@novita.org.au](mailto:enquiries@novita.org.au)

### **Northern Regional Office**

422 Salisbury Highway

Parafield Gardens SA 5107

T 8182 1000

F 8182 1010

E [nro@novita.org.au](mailto:nro@novita.org.au)

### **North-Eastern Regional Office**

5 Darley Road

Paradise SA 5075

T 8207 8940

F 8207 8941

E [nero@novita.org.au](mailto:nero@novita.org.au)

### **North-Western Regional Office**

Days Road

Regency Park SA 5010

T 8243 8311

F 8243 8377

E [nwro@novita.org.au](mailto:nwro@novita.org.au)

## **Southern Regional Office**

111 Beach Rd  
Christies Beach SA 5165  
T 8329 5600  
F 8329 5607  
E [sro@novita.org.au](mailto:sro@novita.org.au)

## **South-Eastern Regional Office**

151 Greenhill Rd  
Parkside SA 5063  
T 8172 9200  
F 8172 9201  
E [sero@novita.org.au](mailto:sero@novita.org.au)

## **Family Support**

171 Days Road  
Regency Park SA 5010  
T 8243 8266  
F 8243 8269  
E [options@novita.org.au](mailto:options@novita.org.au)

## **Toy and Resource Centre**

171 Days Road  
Regency Park SA 5010  
T 8243 8316  
F 8243 8382  
E [library@novita.org.au](mailto:library@novita.org.au)

The opinions expressed in stories and letters and the claims in advertising material presented in Nexus are those of the authors and advertisers respectively and do not necessarily reflect the views of Novita Children's Services Inc, unless stated. Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of Nexus, no liability is accepted for any errors it may contain. Professional advice should also be sought before applying any information contained in Nexus to particular circumstances. Articles from Nexus may be reproduced in other forums as long as the article is reproduced in full with written acknowledgement of the source of the article. Generally, articles of less than 300 words are preferred for publication. Privacy Statement: Novita Children's Services Inc uses your personal information for the purpose of distributing Nexus to you each month. Your information is strictly confidential and will not be disclosed to any external party. If you no longer wish to receive Nexus, please contact the Marketing and Public Relations Department on 8243 8249.

Author: Novita.Marketing

Page 12 of 12

Date Created: 11/07/07 Last Review Date: 11/07/07 Last Modified Date: 07/01/2008