



January—June  
2020 Edition

*Living life the way you choose*

# NEWSLETTER



Able Futures is all about assisting our Participants to create the lifestyle that they choose for themselves. Getting out in the community, participating in sports, doing the shopping and cleaning the house are all part of creating a lifestyle that works.

At Able Futures we believe in equality and encouragement. Our staff are always here for our Participants to assist them when required to achieve their goals whilst feeling safe in a secure environment. If you would like to know more about Able Futures and how we may be able to assist you contact us on 1800 788 884





*Sharon Lee*

*CEO, Director & Founder*

*Able Futures Pty Ltd*

### *A Message from the CEO*

Well what a start to 2020! Able Futures has come a long way since being founded. Welcome to the first edition of our Newsletter for the year 2020, and what an incredibly interesting year it has been so far. The COVID-19 global pandemic has governed how we do things across the planet and Able Futures has been no exception. Despite all the challenges universally faced by the COVID-19 pandemic, Able Futures has been able to progress, and we have been extremely fortunate to be able to continue to operate throughout this crisis, continuing to deliver services to our Participants and keep all of our wonderful team employed to date. However, this only happened with innovation and some redesign. Team Able Futures have been kept on their toes!

Nevertheless, where there are challenges there are always opportunities for growth, learning and victories and Able Futures is well placed to meet these challenges and exceed expectations. Our growing reputation for our model of service has seen Able Futures grow significantly over the past 12 months as we have welcomed over 100 new participants to the Able Futures community. We have undertaken some key works to improve our visibility in the community including the development of a brand new website and reactivation of our social media pages. We have learnt a lot and are placing our focus on the services we will deliver in the post Covid world. We have some exciting plans in the pipeline for Able Futures and continue to work diligently in the background on these ventures while we await some sense of normality to return to the world as we know it.

When I founded Able Futures, the most important thing to me was that people are enabled to live their own lives on their own terms and in their own time. Time and time again over the past year, I am reminded of just how important this is to the people we support as they increase and improve their abilities and take control of the lifestyle they wish to create for themselves.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our Newsletter. Please feel free to provide any feedback or ideas for other things you would like to see in the newsletter going forward. After all this is YOUR newsletter. Lastly, but certainly not least, I would like to give a shout out to The Knights MC. These guys have been a wonderful support to Able Futures over the past year and do some amazing work in the local community. Check out our participants Leith's story in this edition about his involvement and friendship with the Knights.

### **Our Values:**

### **BE FREE**

**Belonging**

**Empowerment**

**Flexibility**

**Respect**

**Equality**

**Encouragement**

**Able Futures are all around us start yours today!**

# Able Futures P/L Management Team & Coordinators



Michaela Pratten  
Services Coordinator

Melanie Bowers  
Snr. Operations  
Manager

Mark Thomas  
Operations Manager

Sharon Lee  
CEO, Director &  
Founder

Jade Bowers  
Coordinator Of  
Supports (CoS)

## ABOUT OUR STAFF

At Able Futures we believe that improved life choices is about experiencing life with minimal interference. Our highly trained staff are here to help our Participants in any way that they can.

The right to dignity and respect, and to live free from abuse, exploitation, and violence. This is in keeping with Australia's commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

"At Able Futures we offer our Participants CHOICES and NETWORKS to provide them with opportunities and services to achieve their goals. We work with you to put in action your approved **NDIS plan**. We help you to understand your plan. We talk with you and your family about any other options. We believe in maximising our Participant's choice and control so you can live life your way."

**Please feel free to contact us for any further information you may require. On 1800 788 884 We are here to assist you in any way that we can.**

## Some Of Able Futures Fantastic Team





## The Team

<b>Sharon Lee</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer, Director &amp; Founder</b>
<b>Mel Bowers</b>	<b>Senior Operations Manager</b>
<b>Mark Thomas</b>	<b>Operations Manager</b>
<b>Charmaine Haynes</b>	<b>Accounts Manager</b>
<b>Jade Bowers</b>	<b>Support Coordinator (COS)</b>
<b>Michaela Pratten</b>	<b>Service Coordinator</b>
<b>Sandra George</b>	<b>Administration Officer</b>
<b>Michael Smith</b>	<b>WHS Officer</b>
<b>Amy Jacobs</b>	<b>Trainee Bookkeeper</b>
<b>Leigh Creighton</b>	<b>Peer Mentor</b>

## Support Workers

<b>Jake Reid</b>	<b>Kasey Grigg</b>	<b>Melissa Hurst</b>
<b>Daniel Jarvis</b>	<b>Alex Capra</b>	<b>Nicole Wetherill</b>
<b>Amber Knight</b>	<b>Max Buni</b>	<b>Naomi Smith</b>
<b>Christine Fraser</b>	<b>Skye Fearnside</b>	<b>Kailey Arnold</b>
<b>Daniel Martin</b>	<b>Emma Weathers</b>	<b>Vanessa Hoyland</b>
<b>Emma McDonald</b>	<b>Jennifer Hamilton</b>	
<b>Peta Gillon</b>	<b>Natalie Penton</b>	

Hey Everyone,

My name is Leigh Creighton and I'm the Peer Mentor for Able Futures. As a person with a disability, my perspective is very important in the delivery of quality services.

I first met Sharon around 10 years ago when I went through a program to learn independent living skills. I have lived independently ever since so I know a little bit about the challenges that can come with creating your own life and lifestyle.

When Sharon first talked to me about her idea of Able Futures we agreed this role would be very important for the people Able Futures supports and my perspective, experience, knowledge and determination not only supports better outcomes for participants but also provides a valuable training source for Support Staff.

I hold a few different hats in my life and COVID-19 has been disruptive so I haven't had much of a chance to do a write up for this newsletter but I wanted to pop my head in quickly to introduce myself. I'm looking forward to letting you know a little bit more about me and my role in the newsletter.





## Welcome from the Operations Manager

Hello Everybody

My name is Mark Thomas, I am stepping into the role of Operations Manager whilst our Senior Operations Manager, Melanie Bowers takes leave for her exciting new adventure of parenthood.

First off, welcome to the very first edition of the Able Futures Newsletter. What a fun and exciting project this has been putting it together with our team. Such a great way to connect with our local community and to showcase what our participants have been getting up to. I along with the rest of the Able Futures staff and participants are excited for the many editions to come.

It has been a fantastic year for Able futures with many fun and exciting programs being developed as well as the successful launch of our group's programs. I can assure that COVID-19 laws haven't prevented us from continuing with that fun and connection for our participants, we are adapting our groups to utilize online gaming and video chat creating a new and exciting way to keep connected in these trying times.

I am looking forward to the months ahead as I settle into my new role. We as a team are diligently navigating the COVID-19 restrictions with great success, but there is also plenty of planning for things to come when we emerge from isolation.

Any input or suggestions from our local community is always encouraged, as we strive to better ourselves as a business and as individuals with the service we provide.

Until our next edition, please stay safe and take care of each other.

Kind Regards  
Mark Thomas

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

COVID-19 was first confirmed in Australia in late January 2020. The year so far has presented many challenges and has changed so much—our way of life, our jobs, our social interactions, our health and so many more things too numerous to list.

At this time it is still very important to have contact with co-workers, friends, family and neighbours and to keep a balance in our lives and maintain our health and psychological wellbeing whilst still maintain social distancing and complying with all regulations regarding community and social activities.

As we move forward and face the changes that the future holds, we know with certainty that we have together endured a challenging period in our lives and we have worked together as a united team and are now focussing on the future a brighter and better and more fulfilling future. The lessons we have learned from this time have made us all stronger and more resilient. It is still important to remain vigilant and stay informed of any changes regarding Covid-19 and social distancing. The future ahead looks bright.



### *To Anderson's Boatshed for their continued support*

It means a great deal to our Participants to be able to hire out a boat and get bait at reduced prices and enjoy our fabulous waterways and do a bit of fishing. Your help makes it possible.



THANK YOU

Any other business who would like to support our participants? We would love to hear from you by phone 1800 788 884 or email [admin@ablefutures.com.au](mailto:admin@ablefutures.com.au)

## Having Fun At Able Futures



Whether it's doing a bit of cleaning, doing some repairs, out with friends, or catching dinner, or just out enjoying the sunshine our Participants love being out and about. Making their own life choices—that's what Able Futures is all about—Lifestyle choices. Able Futures Leading The Way.



# Let's Cook

Not only does Mitchell like to go boating and fishing he also loves to cook. Below is one of the recipes Mitchell has made—looks great Mitchell!



## Tuscan Meatballs



### Ingredients:

450g lean mince  
1 egg  
1/3 cup multigrain breadcrumbs  
Canola Oil to spray.

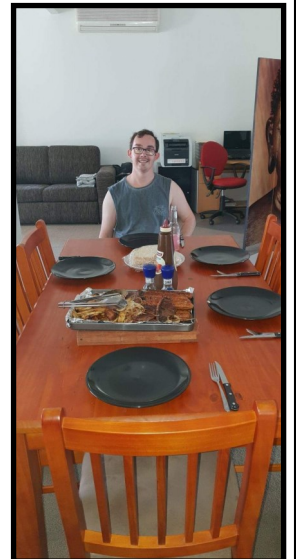
### Sauce:

400gm can no salt diced tomatoes  
1 x Masterfoods Tuscan Meatball recipe  
250grms dry pasta (of your choice)

### Method:

1. In a bowl combine meat, egg and breadcrumbs—make meat balls using
2. 1 tablespoon of meat.
3. Heat canola oil in pan. Add meatballs until brown—turn often.
4. Add the recipe base and can of tomatoes and stir through.
5. Simmer uncovered until sauce is heated through.
6. Cook pasta and serve with meatballs.

**Delicious!**



# Lets Make Pizza

## Ingredients

- 2 cups plain flour
- 8 g dry yeast
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbs olive oil
- 3/4 cup lukewarm water
- 1 x 50grm Sachet of Leggos Pizza Sauce
- 250grms Shredded Cheese
- Toppings of your choice e.g. ham, salami, olives, sliced tomatoes, mushrooms , pineapple, chicken, onion



## Method

- Combine dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl and add oil and water.
- Mix to a soft dough.
- Knead on a floured surface until soft and pliable.
- Return to the mixing bowl and cover with cling wrap and leave in a warm spot for 30 minutes. The dough should double in size.
- Once it has risen, 'punch' the dough once to remove any air bubbles.
- Remove from the bowl and knead gently for 1 minute.
- Roll the dough out to desired size and add your favourite toppings. (some toppings listed above)
- Top with shredded cheese
- Cook for 20 minutes, or until dough has cooked through.



Our Cooks Mitchell and Leith just love getting in the kitchen and whipping up delicious meals. Lets not forget the girls! Mandy loves to get creative in her kitchen too!



Mandy



Mitchell

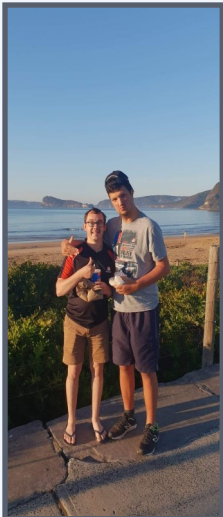
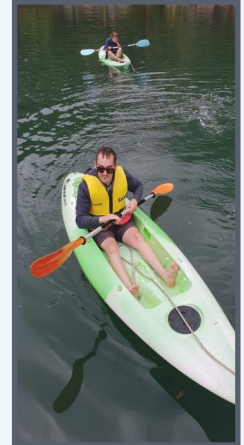
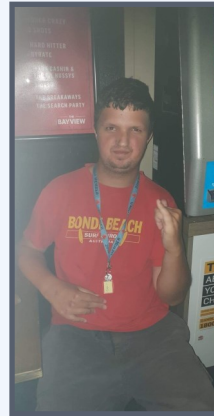
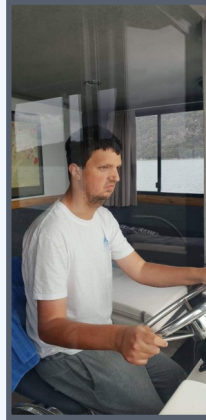


Leith





# ABLE FUTURES MAKING IT HAPPEN



Whether its skippering a houseboat on the Hawkesbury River or paddling a kayak, out with friends or enjoying a birthday celebration in the park with the guys from the Knights Motor Cycle Club and maybe even a ride on a Harley motorcycle, the Participants at Able Futures do it all.

Great times guys! Living it your way.



# FUN FACTS



- 1 There are more lifeforms living on your skin than there are people on the planet.
- 2 The largest recorded snowflake was in Keogh, MT during the year 1887, and was 15 inches wide.
- 3 A single cloud can weigh more than 1 million pounds.
- 4 You cannot snore and dream at the same time.
- 5 A coyote can hear a mouse moving underneath a foot of snow.
- 6 The average person walks the equivalent of three times around the world in a lifetime.
- 7 Men are six times more likely to be struck by lightning than women.

## Birthdays



January June

Kevin 5/3

Marce 13/5

William 17/3

Mitchell 25/5

Gregory 2/3

Jasmine 8/6

Geoff 2/4

Taren 11/6

Leith 11/4

Lilly 26/6

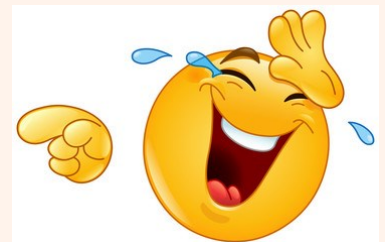
Zac 12/5

**Happy Birthday**

## HAVE A LAUGH!!!



- Q. Why do Bees have sticky hair?  
A. Because they use a honeycomb.
- Q. What is the best season to jump on a trampoline?  
A. Spring Time.
- Q. What is the strongest creature in the world?  
A. The snail—it carries it's whole house on it's back!
- Q. Where do pencils spend their vacation?  
A. Pennsylvania!
- Q. Why did the cow cross the road?  
A. It wanted to go to the moovies!





# The Knights Motor Cycle Club



Story by Participant  
Leith Cooper assisted  
by Dan Martin



D: Who is Andre and where did you meet him?

L: Andre is my friend that I met at karaoke!

D: Where is karaoke?

L: Karaoke is at a bar called The Bayview at Woy Woy.

D: Who are the Knights and where did you meet the Knights?

L: I met the Knights through Andre, and the Knights are guys that do charity things for the community and help the homeless. They also help with fundraising for people that don't have much and help the homeless.

D: Have you done anything with the Knights?

L: I went for a ride with them to Brooklyn and to the Soar and Roar at Eastern Creek Raceway for a fundraiser to help the Special Olympics, we drove down there in the car then I got on the back of Andre's bike and went for a ride around the track a few times. I had to ride on the back of Andre's bike all the way home and had to stop on the M1 as my knees got a bit sore but Andre and I made it all the way home.

L: I organised the Participants' Christmas party for the Knights to come and bring their bikes, and we had KFC so yeah pretty proud of that one.

D: What do you like about Andre?

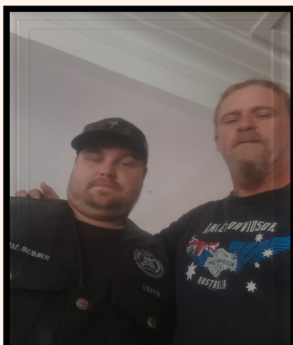
L: He is a nice bloke, he is caring and he would give you anything he is a great bloke and I call him my brother.

D: Have you learnt anything from Andre and The Knights?

L: Ahh yea, how to be nice, and the Knights have taught me lots about being a good person.

D: Does Andre have a job? and if so what does he do?

L: Yeah Andre owns his own company doing landscaping, I've helped him out a few times and its a great time working with Andre







## *A Letter from the - Senior Operations Manager*

Hello Everyone,

My name is Mel Bowers, I am the Senior Operations Manager at Able Futures.

How the year is flying past. I hope everyone has been keeping safe during the challenging times of COVID-19. Here at Able Futures we have taken all precautions to ensure everyone is kept well, and feel like we have learnt so many new skills through these trying times.

COVID-19 restrictions and all, we have been full steam ahead with keeping the Able Future connection alive. Contact through formats such as Zoom, online gaming groups and more...

No challenge is too great for us to overcome! I would like to thank all the hard work from our participants and Able Futures staff for ensuring we got through these challenging times so smoothly.

Able Futures has seen some major growth in the past year, giving us the pleasure of meeting and supporting some amazing people from the community. We feel so privileged to be a part of so many wonderful people's lives.

We have big things in the pipeline for Able Futures and hope that these wonderful people keep flooding in, we are so ready to meet you all!

As for me, I am getting very excited to have my first baby who will be making his entrance in July. I will be taking some leave from early-July to settle into my new role as a mother, however, will be back in January 2021 with my little Able Futures mascot in toe.

I will miss everyone while I am gone but have full faith in leaving you in the capable hands of Mark Thomas who will be filling my shoes while I am off.

No doubt, there is many exciting times ahead. I look forward to what's to come and the progress that Able Futures is in the process of making.

Any feedback is always welcome as this helps us to continue improving our service.

**Until next time, look after yourselves.**

**Mel Bowers**



# Groups and Community Programs



## Current Group Programs

Due to the current Covid-19 social distancing laws we have come up with new creative ways to Learn Laugh and Play while staying safe and healthy.

Some of the current groups running are:

- Online Gaming Group
- Online Cooking Class (via Group Video Chat)
- Online Relationship and social Skills Group (via Group Video Chat)

## Upcoming Groups

We have a variety of skill building and community engagement groups ready to roll out once it is safe to do so.

Some of these groups include:

- Fishing Groups
- Live Football Games
- Woodworking and Furniture Restoration
- Gardening Group
- Men's Health Group
- Karaoke and Talent Show Evenings
- Arts and Crafts Groups
- Bushwalking and Fitness Groups
- Drama and Theatre Groups
- Mechanical skills Group

Get involved with one of our groups today  
Email [GROUPS@ABLEFUTURES.COM.AU](mailto:GROUPS@ABLEFUTURES.COM.AU)



# How to Make a Complaint or Raise a Concern

## Anyone can make a complaint

A complaint can be 'an expression of dissatisfaction with a service provided' or 'a concern that provides feedback regarding any aspect of service that identifies issues requiring a response'

Able Futures will actively support our Participants in the process of making complaints and raising concerns by:

1. Speaking to the CEO directly



- In person (please contact the office to organize a suitable time)
- Via telephone on 1800 7 880 884
- Via email

Our policy ensures that the root cause of your complaint or concern is addressed in a timely manner and you will be involved in the process of reaching a resolution and updated on the status of any new procedures or systems that have arisen as a result of addressing your complaint or concern.

If for any reason you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint or concern, you can raise the issue directly with the NDIS Commission by:

1. Call: 1800 035 544



Visit: [www.ndiscommission.gov.au](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au)

The NDIS Commission also provides the following information for making complaints.

"I'm not happy with an NDIS  
Funded service"

The NDIS Commission

**Call:** 1800 035 544

**Visit:** [www.ndiscommission.gov.au](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au)

"I'm not happy with a service provided by  
another agency"

Your state or territory complaints body

Find the links on the NDIS website

**Visit:** [www.ndiscommission.gov.au](http://www.ndiscommission.gov.au)

"I'm not happy with an NDIA  
action or decision"

NDI or Commonwealth Ombudsman

**Call:** 1800 800 110

**Visit:** [www.ndis.gov.au](http://www.ndis.gov.au)

"I'm at immediate risk of harm, or have  
concerns about my safety"

**Call:** 000 immediately



# What is the NDIS doing to help participants?

(excerpt from NDIS Webpage <https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus/participants-covid-19>)

Changes announced 12 June 2020

In keeping with national health advice, businesses and community are beginning to ease restrictions and some temporary measures introduced by the NDIS response to Covid-19 will also begin to return to normal.

Following a review of temporary measures to support participants and disability providers during the pandemic, the following will apply from 1 July 2020:

Removal of the temporary 10 percent price loading on certain core and capacity building supports.

The definition of short term cancellations reverts back to two business days. Providers will still be able to claim 100 per cent of the agreed support price for a cancellation at short notice, as introduced as part of the Annual Price Review.

The Medium Term Accommodation (MTA) Period will return to the original policy of 90 days (rolled back from 180 days)



# 1800 800 110

## ABLE FUTURES PTY. LTD

### COVID 19 RESPONSE 'RESTRICTION RELAXATION' PLAN Organisational Guidelines

Able Futures Pty Ltd is dedicated to provision of ongoing services for all of our participants. Following on from the COVID- 19 Response—Service Delivery Plan we are now pleased to begin the phase of restriction relaxation to our service delivery commensurate with the NSW Government's easing of restrictions. We will continue to mitigate the risks and deliver services in the safest possible manner.

- **Minimise the risk of community acquired transmission by maintaining the 1.5 mtr social distancing regulations.**
- **Utilising all available resources to provide engaging activities**
- **Sanitising and frequent hand washing remaining in place.**
- **Restricting public access to all premises.**

We hope that this information provides some assurances that we are taking as many precautionary measures as possible to ensure that a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 is not contracted by our participants or staff.

## REGISTRATION OF INTEREST FORM

Able Futures welcomes people of all abilities. If you are interested in our services call us today or fill out the form below to register your interest.

### Participant Details:

Name

Email Address

Contact Number



### Able Futures Services

Please indicate service you are interested in:

Plan Management

Assistance to Achieve Your Plan Goals

Development Of Life Skills

Daily Living/Shared Living

Support (COS)

Participate in Community

Supported Independent Living

Drop In

Assist Personal Care Activities

Group Activities.

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Contact Us

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ABLE FUTURES PTY LTD



**ABLE  
FUTURES**  
CREATING LIFESTYLE  
CHOICES  
CENTRAL COAST, NSW



Any Queries? Contact us we would love  
to hear from you