



**20 November 2014**

**Vinnies and Settlement Services International to launch Ability Links in Eastern Sydney with free community event**

The St Vincent de Paul Society is inviting the local community to join them at a free event to launch the Ability Links program in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs.

Ability Links is a new initiative that aims to connect people with disability (aged 9-64), their families and carers with opportunities in their local community.

To celebrate the launch of Ability Links in Eastern Sydney, a community barbecue will be held on Friday 28 November 2014 at the Margaret Whitlam Recreation Centre, Waverley Park from 11am – 2pm. Come along to share a free lunch, enjoy some entertainment and meet your local Linkers!

Linkers are community members who use their local knowledge and existing networks to support people to pursue their interests and goals in the community. For example, Linkers have assisted people to join a local book club to pursue their love of reading, get a paid job in childcare and apply to attend University.

There is no formal assessment or referral pathway, nor the need for proof of diagnosis or medical reports.

Ability Links NSW is a new initiative of the NSW Government and is being delivered by the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW in partnership with Settlement Services International throughout Sydney.

For more information on Ability Links and this event email: [ability.links@vinnies.org.au](mailto:ability.links@vinnies.org.au) or call 02 8622 0456 or 0475 801 630.

**What: Ability Links in Eastern Sydney Launch free community event**

**When: Friday 28 November 2014, 11am to 2pm**

**Where: Margaret Whitlam Recreation Centre, Waverley Park, Bondi Road.**

**David's story**

David\* heard of Ability Links through Waverley Council. He made contact with a Linker because he was interested to meet other people who do not have a disability and explore his interests. With the assistance of a Linker, he has joined a local Train Enthusiast group, applied for a grant to start a website to sell his artwork, met with a website designer and has begun the process of applying to become a student at the University of Sydney.

"My goal is to go around Australia in a solar powered wheelchair to raise money for three charities. It's a big project and a Linker has been assisting me to get a project manager through the University of Sydney. She's been a great support to help me achieve my goal."

*\*Name changed*

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