

Focus on Health and Wellbeing

All too often carers become caught up in their caring role and forget about their own health and wellbeing. Many of the carers we meet tend to prioritise care for their family member or friend over their own needs.

Having children can sometimes be a catalyst for adopting good habits. Healthy eating and having enough sleep can help families cope. No one thinks less of a new mother for having a lie down when she can, meeting with friends for coffee or taking a relaxing bath.

Why is it therefore, that carers who are in the job for the long haul, often don't think these strategies apply to them?

Sooner or later the effects of multiple demands, physical and emotional stress, overwork or isolation may take over. Certainly, preventative strategies are preferable to remedial ones.

With 2012 approaching, why not take the opportunity to consider how well you are balancing the demands of caring – and your own health and wellbeing.



Young Carers enjoy activities which promote health and wellbeing

Life is best enjoyed when time periods are evenly divided between labour, sleep and recreation.

Brigham Young

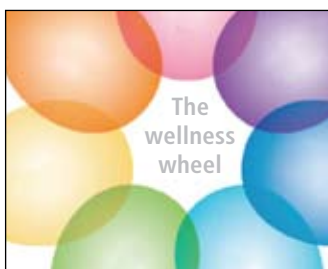
Recreation is as much about creativity as it is going to the beach or on a picnic. Recreation engages us in using our imaginations.

Fun and laughter create good health and wellbeing. If the path

you are on now is not taking you where you want to go, why not consider a new direction in 2012?

Continued page 2

- Take part in our health and wellbeing assessment this issue.
- Gain information and motivation to help you on your way.
- It is never too late to start



3 Wellness Wheel



5 Act, Belong, Commit



6 Pamper Hamper



7 Profile CareLine

Focus on Health and Wellbeing

Our Young Carers Program incorporates ideas around health and wellbeing.

Samme Mills, who supports the Program says, "movement of the body encourages movement of the mind and a fresh perspective. To manage any lifestyle well, you need time and a little space to move."

Throughout the summer season and into 2012, the Young Carers Program offers events and camps, providing a great way to have some time out and meet other young carers.

You may be, or know of a young person with caring responsibilities for family members or friends. Tasks such as property maintenance, household management, interpreting, personal care tasks and/or assisting with social, emotional, medical and mobility needs. If so, you may be eligible to join these outings. Please see details on page 4.

For other carers - who are just as young at heart - you may need to allow some time out to plan your own "re-creation" and there is no better place than to start right here.

On the facing page, see our Wellness Wheel Quiz. The wheel provides a fun look at how you're going. An excellent online assessment can also be found on the Blackmores website www.my.blackmores.com.au. It is free, fun and very motivating.

On page 4, you'll find some carer education sessions for 2012 that might give you some tips for managing

your challenges. On page 6, we invite you to get involved in our Pamper Hamper write-in and support other carers along the way!

Carers Victoria has a new workshop called Wellbeing - Write your cares away. Many carers find they don't feel constrained when writing. What do you think? Write and let us know as we may introduce this workshop in 2012.

On page 7, you'll meet some of the people who regularly staff our CareLine telephone service. A favourite quote was volunteered by our team member Angela, "Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genuine power and magic in it." We couldn't agree more!

We look forward to hearing from you and supporting you in 2012.

Thanks

We would like to congratulate and thank carers who attended events during Carers Week recently and supported one another with stories and insights. Thank you too to the many groups and individuals who donated gifts and gave generously of their time. Many of you mentioned how you enjoyed the beautiful music provided by Ernest Kemplay at the Woodlands Golf Club lunch, the creative art activities from Anne Atkin and Eloise from Melody Street who gave so much more than just her beautiful voice.

THIS NEWSLETTER

Carer South News is published quarterly by the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre Southern Region, a part of Alfred Health, and is distributed via post and electronically to carers and community-based agencies in the southern suburbs of Melbourne.

How to contribute

Stories, news and photos are welcomed. For submissions, feedback and changes to the mailing list, phone 9076 6612 or email j.sweeney@alfred.org.au. Please talk with staff about your experience of our service at any time. Your feedback is welcomed.

SUPPORT FOR CARERS

The Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre Southern Region (CRCCSR) provides support for carers. Offices are situated within Caulfield and Sandringham Hospitals and at Frankston and Dandenong.

The service helps carers with information on aged, community care and disability services (Carelink) and supports carers to secure planned and urgent respite (CareLine). Each of the services is available on the same telephone number.

1800 052 222

Please call this number for information, support and assistance during regular office hours and the service operates 24 hours to assist securing urgent respite if required.

PROGRAM AREAS INCLUDE:

- Aged
- Disability
- Mental Health
- Working Carers
- Dementia & Behaviours
- Residential Respite
- Flexible Respite
- Young Carers

Your call may result in you being introduced to a carer support worker who can assist you with services immediately and in the longer term.

CONTACT US

FREECALL

***1800 052 222**

Community Information (Business Hours)
Carer Support and Respite (24 Hours)

*Calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates

Email

info@carersouth.org.au

Web

www.carersouth.org.au

Mail

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Caulfield VIC 3162

Wellness Wheel Quiz - Rate Yourself

Wellness is about creating a balance between the different parts of your life. Think of it as a wheel with seven spokes - if one spoke (one part of your life) is neglected, the wheel (your overall wellness) will be off balance.

Everyone's wellness will be different, depending on your own needs, experiences, personality and circumstances. Use the wheel to determine what areas of your life are balanced and what may need some adjustment. Recognising where the imbalance is can be a powerful reminder of where you need to get back on track.

Circle the numbers below for the statements that are true for you. Reviewing your responses will help illustrate how many of the seven areas of your life are thriving – or where some attention is needed.



Emotional	Physical	Intellectual
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'm able to ask for help when I need it from friends, family or professionals 2. I have the confidence to do most things I need to 3. I am able to recognise and manage the different stresses in my life 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have adequate sleep and wake feeling refreshed 2. I have at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity (walking, cycling) per day 3. I eat regular nutritious meals that give me the energy I need to stay active and get through the day 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am engaged in using my brain daily 2. I seek out new challenges for work or study 3. I take an interest in what is going on in the broader community
Fun & Recreation	Social & Cultural	Financial
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have a hobby or something I enjoy doing 2. I like to laugh and find I have the opportunity to do so 3. I have some friendships 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am able to find the time to maintain healthy relationships with people I care about 2. I feel a sense of belonging to a group or community 3. I feel safe in my community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I live within my means 2. I have some financial goals 3. I have the opportunity to improve my finances
Spiritual	<p>4 websites to assist wellness *</p> <p>www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au www.susanpiver.com www.StrengthforCaring.com www.authentichappiness.com</p>	<p>4 books to put on your summer wishlist *</p> <p><i>The Artists Way</i>, Julia Cameron <i>Women's Stuff</i>, Kaz Cooke <i>Everyday Kindness</i>, Stephanie Dowrick <i>The Edible Balcony</i>, Indira Naidoo</p>

*The resource recommendations were solicited from CRCCSR staff and are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Workshops for Carers

Throughout the year, we provide the opportunity for carers to come together to join in information sessions and interactive workshops, designed to help you in your caring role.

There are three main categories:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Skills Building
- Understanding Services

These areas can be complex and gaining professional help in the company of other carers can be valuable.

A fresh perspective, coping tips, inspirations, new understanding and just being with other like-minded souls are some of the benefits carers speak about after attending the free sessions.

Some sessions are brief; one or two hour workshops and some, like *Creative Ways to Care – strategies for carers of people living with dementia* are more comprehensive and run over an extended period.

Our schedule is updated regularly and new workshops are added in the Education & Training section of our website.

What's scheduled?

Supporting your Ageing Parents – Where to start?

Saturday 11 February, 2012
Noble Park
Contact Kath Ziffer on 9212 3015 or Greg Pratt on 8781 3402.

Surviving Carer Stress & Caring for Yourself

Tuesday 14 February, 2012
Narre Warren
Contact Jane Bounsall on 9212 3007 or Pauline Lacey on 9212 3010.

Residential Respite Options

Wednesday 29 February, 2012
Dandenong
Contact Margaret Schoonbeek on 9212 3016 or Helen Armstrong on 8781 3403.

More workshops and information at Education & Training
www.carersouth.org.au



The Working Carers Choices Program, invited a group of carers to Pt Lonsdale recently. Carers Victoria hosted a workshop on Changing Relationships in the morning and later carers rocked on the Blues Train and relaxed in the waters of the Peninsula Hot Springs... a fun weekend with others and fresh perspectives!

Event Briefs

Young Carers Activities

Movie Club at Frankston each school term coming up in March & June 2012

Lawn Bowls in Dandenong
3 January

Elsternwick Skate Park
5 January

Sailing Day
8 January

Camp Gembrook
10 - 12 January

Contact Samme on 8781 3411 or Petra on 9076 4045.

Frankston Movie Club

3rd Tuesday of the month
Frankston Library
Carers may bring family and/or the person they care for.

Strictly Ballroom
17 January

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes
21 February

The Sting
20 March

Contact Greg at our Frankston office on 8781 3402.

Advance Care Planning

Advance Care Planning is about preparing for loss of capacity such as if you were injured in an accident or developed an illness like dementia where you are unable to speak for yourself.

It is about appointing who you would want to make medical decisions on your behalf and making your values and preferences known to guide future decision-making.

Wednesday 14 March
Caulfield Hospital

Contact Mandy, Sharon or Carol on 9076 6642.

The ABC of Mental Health

There are many programs to remind and support people to be physically healthy.

The 'Life. Be In It' campaign celebrated 35 years in 2010. The Heart Foundation tick on our food promotes healthy food choices.

Now, Act-Belong-Commit is an innovative campaign with three principles designed to support good mental health.

Act – be physically, socially and mentally active (read, walk, do a crossword puzzle)

Belong – keep up friendships, join in club and community events

Commit – take a challenge, volunteer, support a good cause and help others.

This year's "Celebrate Mental Health" Week walk in Mordialloc was a collaborative event organised by community agencies in Kingston Bayside to promote Act-Belong-Commit concepts.

Despite wet and windy weather, a group of over 200 people including carers, people who are living with mental illness and health professionals walked the foreshore to demonstrate their commitment to improving the mental health of our community.

As carers, especially those who support a person with a mental illness, it is often easy to forget your own personal needs whilst dealing with the significant demands of your caring

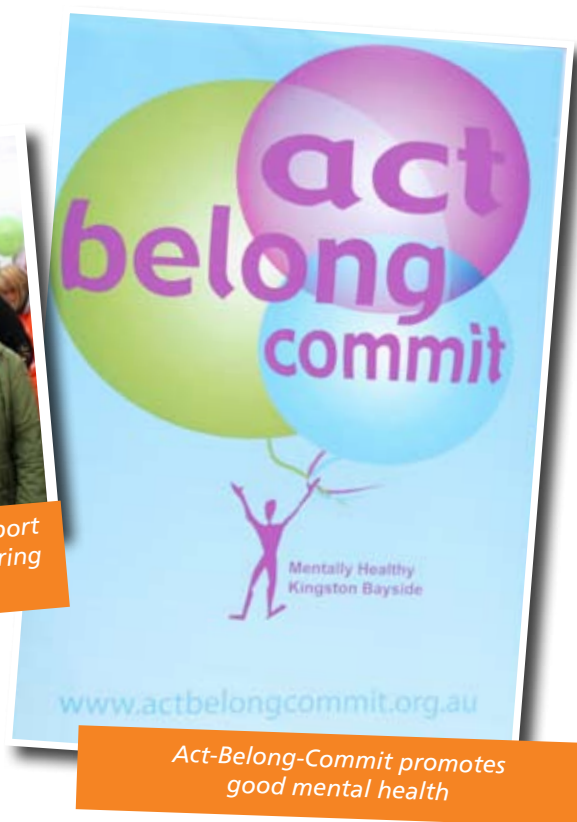
role. It's vital that you find ways to preserve your own health, wellbeing and social connection with people including other carers. Remember the ABC of Act-Belong-Commit and challenge yourself to do one thing for yourself each day!

It can be as simple as taking the dog for a walk, phoning a friend or inviting your neighbour in for a cuppa. Whatever works for you is OK. As coined in another slogan, the important thing is to "just do it"!

For more information about resources for mental health carers see www.carersouth.org.au.



Walkers demonstrate support to Act-Belong-Commit during Mental Health Week



Act-Belong-Commit promotes good mental health

Have a good weekend

Are you looking for a break on the weekend?

If you care for someone over 65 with dementia, they may benefit from being part of The Weekenders Program. Meanwhile you can plan some time for yourself.

The Weekenders is a weekend respite program which operates from Napier Street Day Centre in South Melbourne.

It caters for a small group of six people with dementia. It

usually runs between 9.00am and 3.00pm. This gives carers up to six hours of respite to pursue their own activities.

Program participants are well supported with a combination of indoor activities at the Day Centre and occasional outings.

The Weekenders Program is for residents of Port Phillip, Bayside, Stonnington, Glen Eira and Kingston.

Transport to and from the

Centre can be provided for local participants. An assessment is required to determine eligibility.

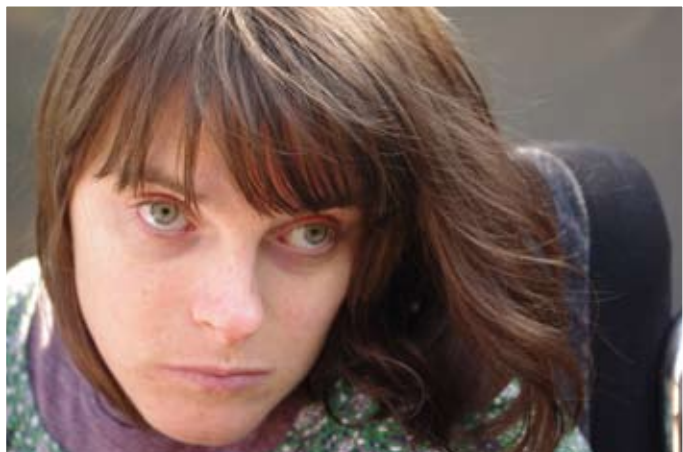
There is a small charge of \$7 per session/day to cover lunch, refreshments and other related costs.

If you would like to learn more about The Weekenders Program, please phone our Flexible Respite Coordinator on 9212 3008 weekdays or contact The Weekenders Team Leader on 0418 537 661 on the weekend.

Carer Story

Annee Angell is a local carer who wrote to us recently with some reflections on looking after her daughter Lindsey. Lindsey has cerebral palsy. She is blind, intellectually impaired and is extremely physically disabled. Annee says, "she needs care for all her daily personal needs. She requires constant stimulation and entertainment otherwise she becomes uncomfortable and frustrated."

Annee writes, "having Lindsey not only changed my life but changed me as a person. Caring for someone can be extremely demanding with many negative aspects but I have discovered that there are actually far more positive things to be gained." Annee has written a poem to perhaps help others look at their situation more positively and see that there are many good things to be gained from being a carer.



Lindsey

You are the millstone 'round my neck,
my cross to bear, my prison door.
You are my little doll to dress
to feed and care for evermore.
You try my patience, test my will,
a challenge in every way.
You make me sad, you make me cry,
you break my heart each day.
I will not dwell on all these things,
I choose instead to see
the many wonderful qualities
that you have given me...

Tolerance, Strength, Empathy,
Determination, Unselfishness, Gratitude,
Forgiveness, Wisdom, Understanding,
Endurance, Hope, Bravery, Joy, Assurance,
Respect, Acceptance, Appreciation,
Patience, Curiosity, Humility, Knowledge,
Persistence, Redemption, Responsibility,
Thoughtfulness, Accountability, Changed
priorities, Devotion and above all,
unconditional love.

Pamper Hampers to share

Just so you know we are serious about supporting your wellbeing, we have three Pamper Hampers to give away for the summer! Each hamper has a little bit of something to support your senses: fragrant surprises, movie tickets to feed your imagination, a gift card and more! All you have to do is post or email your wellbeing tips to us by 5pm January 31, 2012 to be placed in the random draw. You can write to us using the Contact Us information on page 2. Please make sure you add your name, address and phone number and we'll publish some of the tips in future issues.



CareLine

What is the role of CareLine?

CareLine staff are respite specialists and understand the challenges of caring. For instance, when a crisis or something unplanned happens in your life, staff can assist by discussing your immediate needs. We can help to make the necessary arrangements for alternative care for the person you care for. We can also assist with other kinds of respite care in the short term and connect you with our Carer Support Programs and other services to support you into the future. We also have after hours staff available to assist carers requiring urgent and immediate respite and emotional support outside business hours in the evenings, weekends and public holidays.

How are CareLine staff qualified?

Many are social workers and some have a special interest in say, working with people from different ethnic backgrounds.

Some come from nursing or allied health backgrounds. As well as being professionally qualified, some staff are, or have been carers themselves.

Can anyone call CareLine?

Yes, CareLine is here to assist anybody who is in a caring role in the community. You don't need to be referred, though other services often give carers our phone number and invite them to contact us.

Recommended stress-busters?

Jenny: Deep breaths and a short power walk.

Michelle: Enjoy a bath, listen to relaxing music, read a good book.

Carrie: I sing to relieve the stress.



CareLine staff wish you a stress-free summer season

Some favourites include *It's Raining Men*, *Working 9-5* (Dolly Parton).

Katheryne: Coffee, movies, walking on the beach.

Paula: Hug and talk to my two boys, go for a walk or ride my bike.

Angela: Think of one thing you are grateful for, then thank it for what it gives you. I find this helps to "let go" and "open up my heart".

How to get through the busy season ahead?

Jenny: Keep hydrated, ask for help when you need it and enjoy the socialisation this season brings.

Michelle: Make a conscious choice not to get caught up in the hype of the holiday season.

Katheryne: Take constant and regular breaks, go to the movies on a Tuesday when it's cheaper, go out for coffee with a friend.

Paula: Plan your own little celebrations or traditions to mark what is special to you. Take the lead rather than be led by sometimes meaningless hype at this time of year.

Angela: Take yourself away from the hustle and bustle of shops; go for a walk, even just down the street and take in what's around you as though looking for the first time (especially flowers and nature) or other things that "please your eye".

Favourite saying?

Jenny: Always laugh when you can. It is cheaper than medicine!

Carrie: Don't forget to breathe.

Michelle: Don't sweat the small stuff.

Katheryne: The winds of change are coming...change is good.

Angela: "Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it." *Johann Wolfgang Van Goethe*.

During the holiday period, CareLine staff will be on hand to provide assistance with information, emotional support and urgent respite.

Phone FREECALL* 1800 052 222.

(* Calls from mobile phones are charged at applicable rates).



Three courses in 30 minutes

Our CareLine team got together to create their ultimate, healthy choice 3-course meal and they say it can be prepared in under 30 minutes! Enjoy!

Entree

Sliced vine ripened tomato arranged on a platter with slices of Bocconcini cheese sprinkled with thinly sliced fresh basil leaves.

Drizzle with juice of half a lime and 3 tablespoons of olive oil.

Main Course

Chicken breast marinated in lime juice, garlic, fresh oregano and olive oil for 30 minutes then grilled.

Serve with a baked potato and salad of mixed green salad leaves.

Dressing for salad

Chunks of fresh mango

Fresh chilli to taste

Juice of 1 lime

Half a cup of olive oil

Blend all 4 ingredients together and drizzle over salad and baked potato.

Dessert

Put mixed fresh berries in a bowl with a dollop of vanilla yoghurt.

Finish the meal with a nice cup of herbal tea. Chamomile or green tea tastes great with twist of lime.

Join our Newsletter mailing list by sending this back to the address below or email j.sweeney@alfred.org.au with your request and address details. This will add you to our carer mailing list. If you represent an agency or community group, please telephone 9076 6612 to request copies.

Your name:

ph:

Your postal or
email address

p/code:

If undeliverable, return to:

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre
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Caulfield Hospital
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