

# Looking to Social Inclusion

There is a place for everyone



CITY OF  
**TEA TREE GULLY**  
*Naturally Better*

# Quote to guide us today

“It is clear that there’s no limit to the scope of voluntary involvement of people with a disability as long as there are no barriers, real as in inaccessible workplaces, or artificial as in attitudes.”

*Involvement of people with disabilities*

Myth versus reality

Michael Simpson

Australian Journal on Volunteering,

Vol. 6, No. 2, 2001

# Take home messages

- Disability is only as limiting as we make it to be
- To be socially inclusive, all we need is an open heart, an open mind & some flexibility
- Having volunteers with a disability does not create more work...you just need to learn to think differently!

# Social Inclusion

- “Social inclusion recognises that many Australians are excluded from the opportunities they need to create the life they want...”
- A socially inclusive society is one in which everyone feels valued and has the opportunity to participate fully in the community
- Volunteering is a way that all people can contribute
- People with a disability can volunteer too!

# Who are our volunteers?



# Why should 'they' be included?

- Create a more diverse volunteer team
- Build social capital
- Added programme value
- Increase accessibility
- Foster community understanding
- For the individual... the smile will say it all!

# Disability in Australia

- 4 million people
- 3% mental health or behavioural disorder
- 2.1 million Australians of working age
- The labour force participation rates 54.3% compared with 83%

# Story time with David & Rose





# What are the challenges?

- Organisational Culture
- Staff resistance
- Not perceived as core business
- Perception of 'too hard'

*So what did we do?*

# Creating awareness and culture

- Opened the door & started the conversation
- Developed a Disability Discrimination Awareness (DDA) framework
- Provided opportunities to discuss the issues
- Share the stories

# Opportunity and Accessibility

- Look at what people *can do*
- Establish expectations and goals
- Get people involved and *build relationships*
- Be flexible, positive and open
- *Do not* be afraid to say no

# The Myths

A volunteer with disabilities will:

- Only be able to do basic tasks
- Need special training
- Not be covered by our insurance
- Will need special attention
- Be too much hard work

SOME PEOPLE WANT  
IT TO HAPPEN, SOME  
WISH IT WOULD  
HAPPEN, OTHERS  
MAKE IT HAPPEN.

