

hunter circles

Hi friends!

Welcome to our June Newsletter!

(A little late...but better late than never 😊)

In this edition, we're excited to share:

- Highlights from our community screening of ***Moving Forward From Institutions*** and our presentation at the **DSC Annual NDIS Conference** in Melbourne
 - Upcoming events and workshops you won't want to miss
 - Ways you can get involved in building a [Community For Everyone!](#)
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Moving Forward From Institutions - Community Screening

We were honoured to have over 90 people join us on 29 May for the screening of ***Moving Forward From Institutions*** — a short film that reflects on the history of disability institutions in NSW and honours the voices of people who advocated for their closure. Thank you to everyone who came!

The event brought people together in reflection, solidarity and action for a more inclusive future. We're proud to collaborate on this important work with the [Council for Intellectual Disability](#) and researchers from the University of Technology Sydney, Dr Phillippa Carnemolla and Dr Linda Steele.

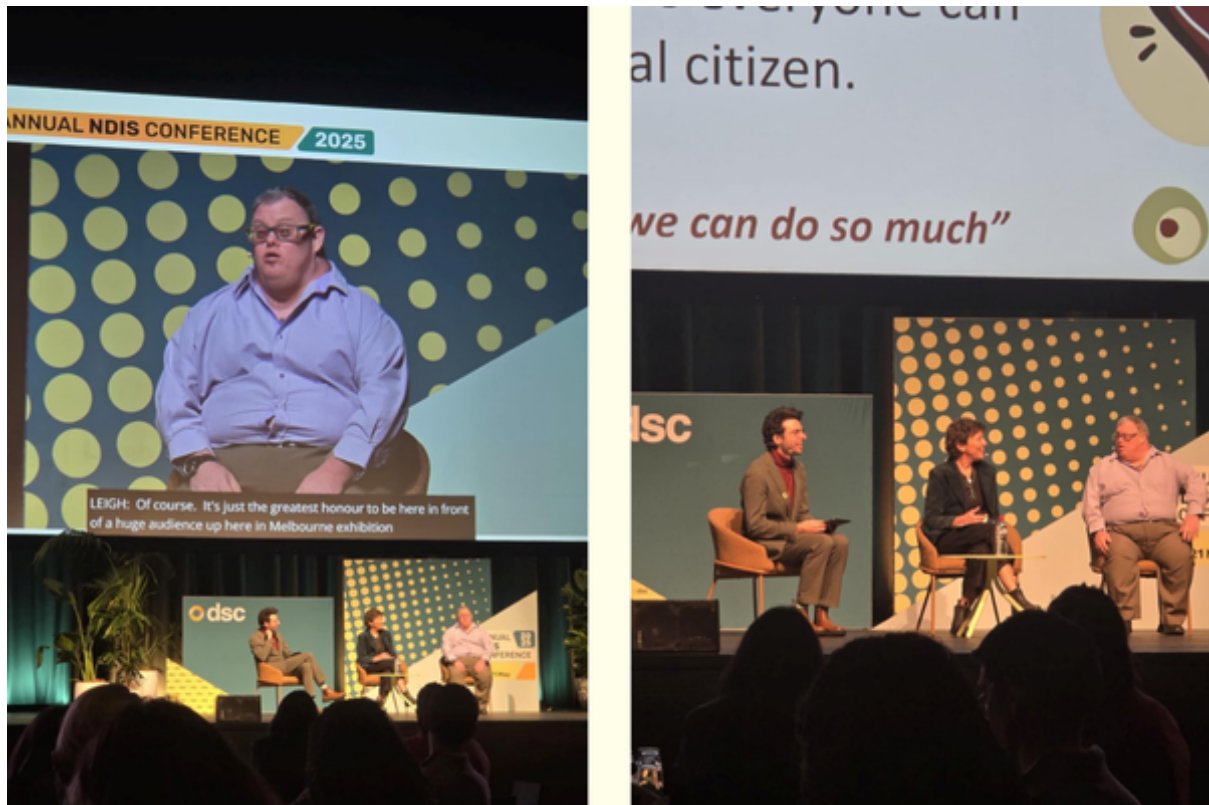
We invited everyone to write a ***Letter to Future Generations*** and received over 80 heartfelt responses. These letters shared reflections on how we can honour and remember people with disability who lived and died in institutions - and how to make our communities places of true belonging and inclusion. One person wrote, ***“We must truly listen to the voices of people who lived it - and learn from the mistakes of the past. Hearing these stories made me realise just how far we still have to go. This film was a call to action where I found myself asking: Who is still being left out? And what can I do to bring someone in?”***

The event was also a fundraiser for Rob, a peer leader at Hunter Circles who features in the film. Rob is raising money to buy a wheelchair accessible van

and this event helped him get closer to that goal. [Please share his fundraiser with your friends and networks to help him reach his goal even faster!](#)



[Read more in our blog](#)



At the DSC Annual NDIS Conference

On 22 May, Leigh and Jen travelled to Melbourne to present at the DSC Annual NDIS Conference to share what we are learning from **Community For Everyone** - our pilot project with [Side By Side Advocacy](#) that supports people with intellectual disability who live in group homes to build community connections.

Leigh talked about what it means to lead this work from lived experience and why real inclusion can't be created through paid support alone.

Because money can't buy you love. Money can't buy you friendship. And money can't buy you belonging.

We know that you can't manufacture friendship - but you can set the stage for it. We shared some stories and films that show how you can create the conditions for friendships to grow:

- **See the person as their gifts**
- **Find the people and places where those gifts can be shared.** That won't happen going to the movies or going shopping.
- **Be consistent** - same time, same place, same people — over time — over shared interests.
- And always – **one person at a time.** One situation, one environment at a time. **Not in groups. Not in programs.**

That's how friendships grow - because it's **people who keep people safe** and it's relationships that give life meaning.

👉 **Want to find out more or get involved?**

Whether you're curious, ready to get involved, or want to chat over coffee

— [we'd love to hear from you!](#)



Events and Workshops

These events are coming up. Follow the links for more information and to register.

[June Meet-Up: The 7 Keys to Citizenship](#)

Who it's for: People involved in our *Community For Everyone* project — and anyone else who wants to find out more.

What: A chance to connect, share stories, and explore the *7 Keys to Citizenship* together.

When: Friday 27 June, 12.00 - 1.30

Where: 437 Hunter Street, Newcastle

Cost: Free

🗣️ [Listening to People Rarely Heard – Presented by Dr Jo Watson](#)

Who it's for: Anyone who wants to become a stronger communication support partner and inclusion practitioner.

What: A practical workshop on communication strategies to support decision-making for people who communicate informally.

When: Tuesday 1 July, 9.00 - 3.00

Where: The Place Community Centre, Charlestown

Cost: Free for people involved in our *Community For Everyone* project.
\$200 for others.

🤝 [Circle of Support Facilitator Training - 2 days of training](#)

Who it's for: Anyone interested in getting involved in our *Community For Everyone* project by starting or joining a Circle of Support.

What: Two days of hands-on training to learn the values, principles and practical tools to facilitate or be part of a Circle of Support.

When: Monday 28 July & Monday 4 August, 9.00 - 3.00

Where: The Place Community Centre, Charlestown

Cost: Free



Get involved in building a *Community For Everyone!*

If you are interested in meeting other people, being part of something bigger and making a shared contribution to our amazing Hunter community?

We'd love to hear from you.

There are so many ways to get involved - you can start or join a Circle, meet up once a month(or whatever works for you) , or simply share what you love with someone new. However you join in, you'll be part of a growing community that values inclusion, connection and having fun.

Do you have a passion, hobby, or skill to share?

Everyone has a gift. Share yours with someone who has similar interests — and build a real connection.

Are you part of a local club, volunteer group or community organisation?

Invite someone in. Introduce a person to your group. Share what you love doing.

People who do things together are more likely to become friends.

Join a Circle of Support

Circles are small groups of people who support a person with disability as they plan and live their best life.

You don't need to be an expert — just a human.

“Each of us has choices – about whether we will pass each other without stopping, listening or really seeing. Or we could help to build – or to be part of – someone’s Circle of Support.”

— Jack Pearpoint (Inclusion activist, Canada)

If you or someone you know is interested, please get in touch!

- Reach out to us any time. Contact Jen (she/her) at info@huntercircles.org or 0401 388 164
- Tell us more about yourself by [filling out this form](#)
- Visit our [website](#) for more information
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) to keep up with the action.
- Share this email with others who may be interested in joining our [mailing list](#) to stay in touch.
- [Contact us for a chat](#). We'd love to hear from you!

There are so many ways to get involved - join us and be the change you want to see. We hope to see you soon 😊

Our project partner, Side By Side Advocacy is running the Community For Everyone project in Parramatta and Ryde. Contact Kim (she/her) at Side By Side Advocacy:
info@sidebysideadvocacy.org.au
9808 5500

**There is no justice in this country without First Nations justice.
Hunter Circles acknowledges the Awabakal and Worimi peoples as the
Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, and we pay our
respects to Elders both past and present. Sovereignty was never ceded.**

[View email in browser](#)

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