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the official newsletter of LifeLink™

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## "Teagan's Story"

### Celebrating 10 Years of Love and Support

*"I'm so glad I walked through that front door 10 years ago"* said Kristy, as she points to the front entrance to Nollamara House.

*"It has made such a positive difference in Teagan's life, and mine".*



**W**e recently visited Nollamara House and were delighted to meet Kristy and her beautiful daughter, Teagan, and to have the opportunity of chatting with Kristy about Identitywa, the importance of support they offer and her experience as a client over the past decade.

Identitywa supports families and carers to have regular, planned breaks from their caring role. While families and carers have a break, individuals can stay in one of Identitywa's houses, where they can take part in activities of their choice at the home and in the community.

Nollamara Children House started in 1995 and approximately 70 families per year are supported through this facility. It is one of the two children's support houses established by Identitywa - the other being Riverton House.

The houses are located in quiet residential streets and have a warm and homely feel where your family member will feel 'at home'. Each home caters for up to six people at a time, so there are plenty of opportunities for making new friends.

Multiple living rooms indoors and covered seating areas in the well-equipped backyards also invite relaxation when a quiet space is desired. The houses are well-equipped with aids and equipment to meet a range of needs including play equipment.

**Teagan is fourteen (14) years old and has been coming to Nollamara House since the age of four (4). Teagan has a Traumatic Brain Injury and Cerebral Palsy which impacts on her mobility, speech and even her ability to take food orally.**

Teagan enjoys coming to stay at Nollamara House on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week. She is well cared for by Identitywa's Support Workers like Camelia (who we also met during our visit).

*"The Support Workers here are truly beautiful people. They are compassionate, loving and treat Teagan so well. Whilst I miss her every minute she is not with me at home, I know that here at Nollamara House she is with 'family'... and that makes a world of difference"* said Kristy.

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Camelia



As a mother, I am so grateful for the help, support, genuine care and compassion that Identitywa and Nollamara House share with Teagan and me.



Marina Re, CEO of Identitywa said *“Caring for the Carers is such an important part of what we do at Identitywa. Taking a break works two ways. It is about Carers recharging their batteries, and it’s about individuals having a good time away from home, enjoying new experiences and also some familiar ones too.*

*Our Support Workers work with families to ensure that any existing routines and programs are followed and individual activities are tailored to meet the needs of each person, reflecting their interests and preferences,”* said Marina.



Nollamara House

Like all teenagers, Teagan goes to school during the week at the Gladys Newton School in Balga, where she is joined by approximately 82 students aged from 4 to 18 years.

Gladys Newton School is a centre of excellence, creating opportunities for success for students with intellectual disabilities, autism and severe mental health issues.

Kristy explained *“At Gladys Newton, Teagan has hydro therapy sessions which are really important for her health and well-being, she participates in cooking classes and other fun learning activities, and they also have social outings to enjoy such as bowling or visits to Landsdale Farm, which as a Junior Bush Ranger, Teagan loves”* she said.

After school, Teagan returns to Nollamara House for the usual bath, dinner and more fun.

*“Teagan has such a good time when she is here”* said Kristy. *“When she comes home, she is smiling although tired from all the fun and sleeps soundly that first night home.*

*As a mother, I am so grateful for the help, support, genuine care and compassion that Identitywa and Nollamara House share with Teagan and me.*

*There is no question in my mind that Nollamara House is the best respite care facility in Perth.*

*As I said earlier, I am just so glad that I found them, and I walked through that front door”* said Kristy.

## EDITOR'S NOTE:

If you or your family member needs assistance or support, Identitywa can help with:

- WA NDIS
- Having a break
- Community and recreation supports
- Shared management and self-management of supports
- School leavers supports
- Individual and shared living options
- In-Home and Out-of-Home support
- Host/alternate family support

The work of Identitywa and Nollamara House are financially supported through your ongoing and generous donations to the Archbishop's Christmas and Winter Appeals, and via our website at [www.lifelink.com.au](http://www.lifelink.com.au).

We are indeed grateful. *Thank you!*





## Art provides perfect connection for Adele and Wendy

**T**he chance to work for an organisation which makes a difference to the quality of people's lives was the motivating factor for visual artist, Wendy, to join Identitywa, one of WA's leading agencies supporting people with disability and their families.

Her background in Visual Arts, and in particular Creative Arts Therapy, has certainly been a bonus for Adele whom Wendy supports on a weekly basis. In addition to the chance to draw and colour at home, she loves her painting lessons with Wendy. They regularly travel to Neil Hawkins Park in Joondalup as the park provides a beautiful and peaceful setting for Adele to paint.

Identitywa's vision is to see all people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of well-being. One of the initiatives implemented by the agency to assist in achieving this outcome is the integrating of Personal Outcomes Measures for each of the people they support. Personal Outcomes Measures originated in Canada through the Council on Quality and Leadership and have been used in support settings for over 20 years.

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**Identitywa's vision is to see all people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of well-being.**

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Adele has identified improving her physical fitness as one of her Personal Outcomes Measures so Wendy takes her to the local gym each week where she completes a circuit and works on her stretching and balance.



*"My favourite thing to do is painting and making jewellery,"* shares Adele. Wendy also plans quality activities that Adele and her husband, George, can participate in together such as fortnightly trips to do banking and food shopping or perhaps a walk along Hillary's boardwalk.

Wendy really enjoys her time with Adele too.

*"Supporting Adele to achieve her goals is a delight,"* says Wendy. *"Art plays a big role in the activities I've implemented with Adele. As a professional artist, I truly believe that art is the vehicle for self-expression. Art engages not only the intellect, but the heart and soul, and ignites passion that lights up lives not just for the moment, but for a life time. Art never discriminates; there are no mistakes - only new experiences!"*



# A shared vision DELIVERS REAL BENEFITS

A shared vision for educating and inspiring staff to achieve the best life for the people they support has seen a collaboration between LifeLink supported agencies –  Identitywa and  Centacare Employment & Training.

**C**entacare Employment and Training is a not-for-profit, registered training organisation (RTO) established in 1976 as a social service agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth. It delivers flexible education courses and fully accredited industry training programs specifically for disadvantaged and/or marginalised members of the community who are looking to learn new skills or obtain the qualifications necessary to go on to further study, training or employment.

Having highly skilled staff is critical to the delivery of Identitywa's services which are aimed at supporting people throughout their lives.

*"Our focus is to work with individuals, to provide them with plans which are centred on their specific needs as they require assistance due to ageing, disability or other reasons," said Britta Meyer, Manager of Operational Services, Identitywa.*

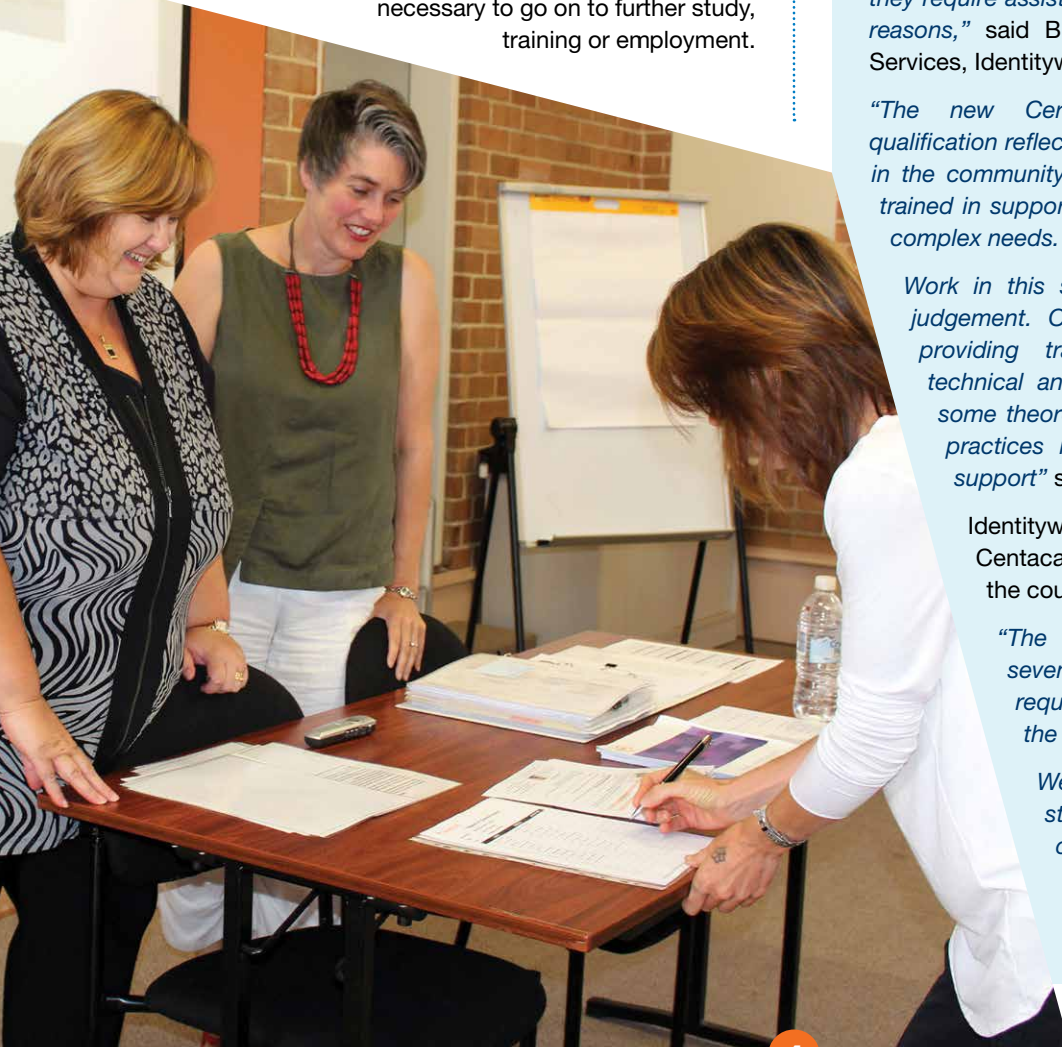
*"The new Certificate III Individualised Support qualification reflects the current need for people working in the community and/or residential setting to be fully trained in supporting individuals with minimal to highly complex needs.*

*Work in this sector involves using discretion and judgement. Our goal is to support our staff by providing training which will deliver factual, technical and procedural knowledge, as well as some theoretical knowledge of the concepts and practices required to provide person-centered support" said Britta.*

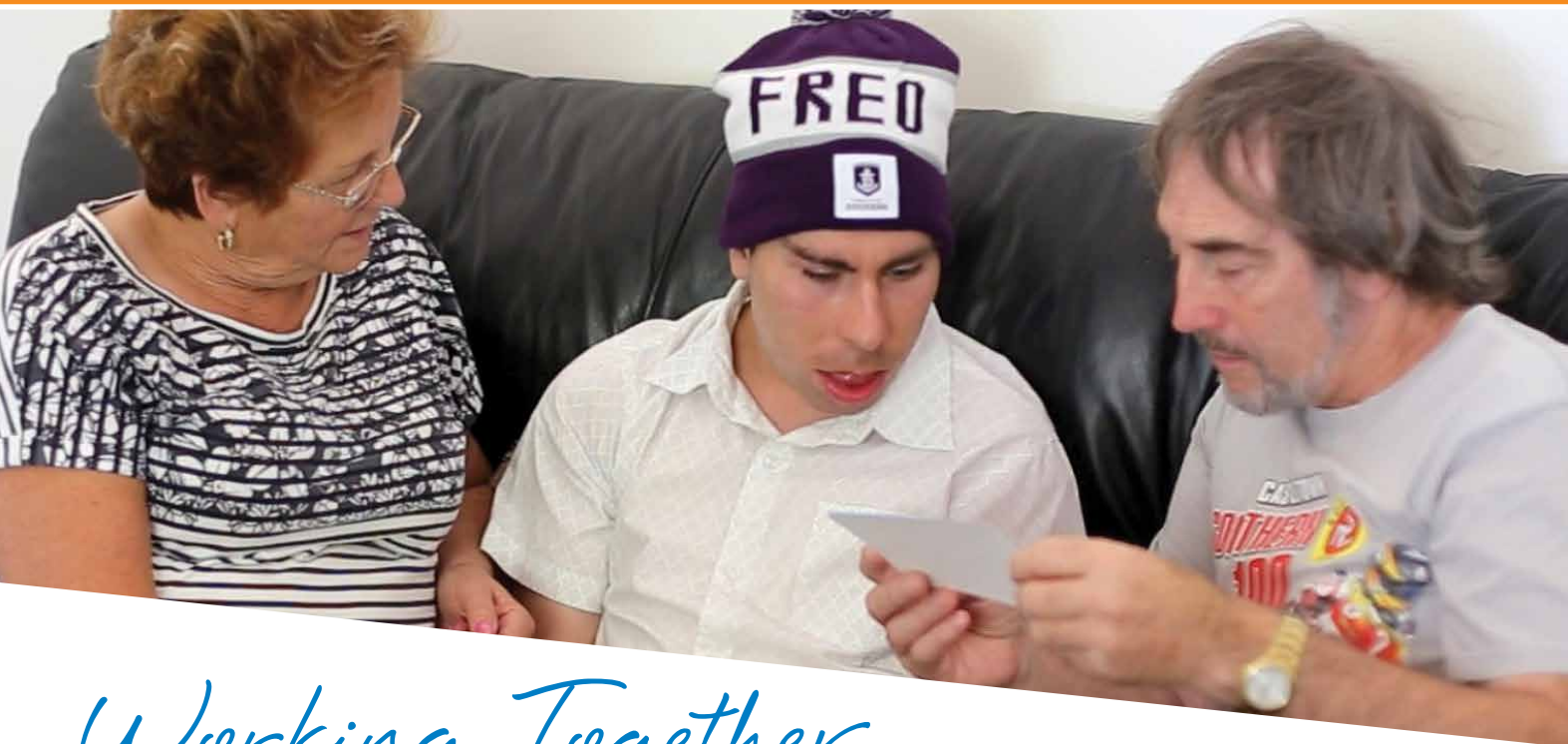
Identitywa staff have been working closely with Centacare to recruit a trainer who will deliver the course.

*"The qualification consists of 13 units - seven core units - and six elective units and requires assessment to take place whilst in the workplace.*


*We are delighted to be able to offer to our staff the quality training opportunities delivered by our sister LifeLink agency – Centacare Employment & Training," said Britta.*







# Working Together DELIVERS GREAT OUTCOMES

Being passionate about achieving the best quality of life for the people they support is definitely a motivating factor for  Identitywa's staff.

Over the past 12 months, the staff supporting the five young men living in Identitywa's Butler Street House has been committed to making it a place they are truly happy to live in.


Together with parents, they have decorated the house, planted a vegetable garden and built a chicken coop which is home to four hens. The new fresh look of the house provides a very welcoming atmosphere for all who live and work there, and for those who come to visit.

For 22-year-old James, the decorating was a real family affair. He had great fun choosing the paint for his room and helping to paint it with his mother, Marie.

Wednesdays are a favourite day for James because that is the day his grandparents come to visit. They always bring his favourite lunch, McDonalds, and sit and chat with him for the afternoon.

Team Leader, Ann-Marie, is pleased about what has been achieved by the staff and their ongoing commitment to thinking of fun and engaging outings for James, Roland, Morgan, Tim and Christian.

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 Identitywa's Butler Street House has been committed to making it a place they are truly happy to live in.

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*"The activities which the staff have tried varies a lot," explains Ann-Marie.*

*"Recently they all had a great experience when they visited Rottneest Island for the day where they swam and looked around the island and, of course, they loved the quokkas.*

*Some other fun activities over the past few months have included a visit to AQWA and Hillary's Boat Harbour, trekking through John Forrest National Park and swimming at Lake Leschenaultia.*

*The staff are always keen to ensure the men have fun; their enthusiasm is contagious and inspiring," said Ann-Marie.*






# With Grateful Thanks Lotterywest supported

By Marina Re, CEO  Identitywa

**"W**e commenced the New Year with the wonderful news that our applications to Lotterywest for support of the development of a dedicated regional office for Identitywa in Cockburn, and the establishment of the new corporate base in Northbridge, had been successful.

With the support of our Board, in particular, Board Chair, Mr Graeme Mander, planning for both these exciting projects has been extensive and has required ongoing liaison with a number of key stakeholders.

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 Identitywa's Vision is to build a community in which **'All people live with a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of wellbeing'**.

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The opportunity to extend our outreach by establishing a 'physical presence' in the WA NDIS "Cockburn-Kwinana" trial area is an important development for us, as it will assist us in increasing our capacity to support individuals and families with disability.

Lotterywest has also been integral to funding the implementation of a range of high tech solutions which are focused on improving our corporate efficiency.

This includes state-of-the-art training and induction platforms, paperless recruitment and the implementation of a comprehensive database with rostering functionality which links many key activities across Identitywa.

We are indebted to Lotterywest for all their support and are very excited about the future of our organisation".

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**Editor's Note:** Lotterywest continues to support and assist many of our LifeLink agencies with direct funding for important projects and programmes. As a direct result of this generous support, our LifeLink agencies continue their mission of care to people in need within the Western Australian community.

***Together, we can, and do, make a difference!***

