

Vela Microboards Australia – Update 2

Welcome to the second update on the work of Vela Microboards Australia. There are continuing enquiries from allies and the general community, indicating a widespread interest in both the concept and the work of the group.



'I am a parent of a 20 year old young man with lots of challenges. He is looking to move out of home. A Microboard offers a way for us to help plan for this and assist Paul to have a good life. I am also the chairperson of the board of Perth Home Care Services.'

. . . . Leighton Jay

Vela Microboards Australia Steering Committee

(L-R) Marita Walker (Perth Home Care Services), David Gornall, Lyn Young, Mike House, Annette Walker (video-link from Albany), Gillian Rainer, Leighton Jay, Marc Lema, Jaquie Mills, Eddie Bartnik, Insert – Susan Stanford, Absent – Simon Purdue, Helen Soerink.

The Steering Committee acknowledges the inaugural chairmanship of Marc Lema for the first six months of work, and is celebrating the achievement of several aspects of the Strategic Plan:

- The appointment of a consultant, David Gilchrist, to assist in the development of the model of Microboards in the context of the Australian legal framework. David comes well equipped for this role as an Associate Professor at the University of Notre Dame in the School of Business and an academic researcher in the not-for-profit sector which has included work with Family Support Associations.
- The appointment of a Project Officer, Susan Stanford, who commenced in January to assist the work of the Steering Committee and the establishment of individual Microboards. Susan has many years background working in human services, including as a physiotherapist, teacher and Local Area Coordinator. She has a strong interest in finding ways to facilitate the rich, people-resources of our communities to be more broadly available and connected.

Susan and David are employed by Perth Home Care Services through a PHCS sponsorship arrangement to support the establishment of Vela Microboards Australia.

- A tangible commitment to supporting the involvement of regional families with:
 - steering committee meetings using video-link to connect across the state,
 - a recent face to face meeting of the Steering committee in Kojonup,
 - the appointment of **Helen Soerink**, a parent and Local Area Coordinator from Albany, as the Steering Committee Chairperson for the next six month period.



- ✿ The development of a short description of a Microboard. This is a work in progress and may be refined in the future.



What is a Microboard?

A Microboard is not something to do with computers!

It is a small (micro) group of committed family and friends (board) who join with a person who has life challenges to create a non-profit community board. The Microboard supports the person to plan for a good life and to achieve their goals, dreams and wishes.

Each Microboard supports one person.

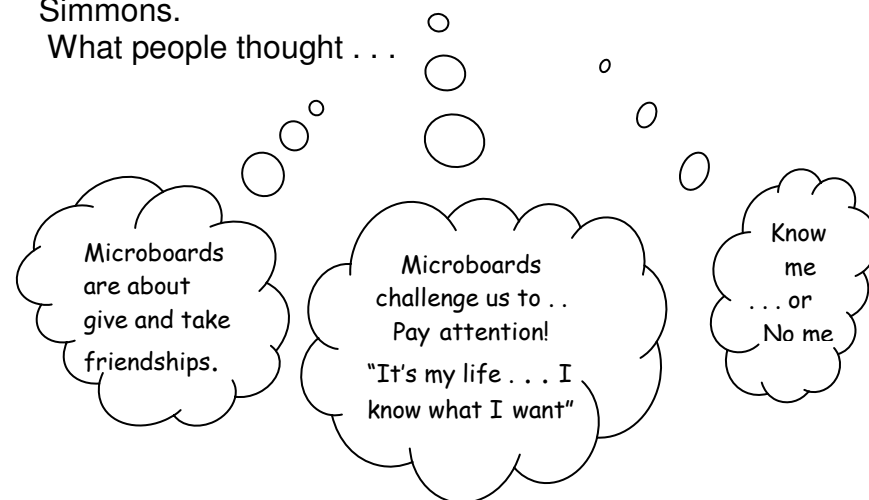
The person is the centre of their Microboard, and every decision reflects the person's goals, dreams, needs and desires (ie uses person-centred thinking).

The Microboard also helps the wider community to have a relationship with the person, and to benefit from their contribution.

Membership of a Microboard is voluntary and focuses on the wellbeing, wishes and dreams of the person by supporting their relationships with family, friends and community. In addition, Microboards may manage some funding, so may pay for and manage individualised supports and services for a person who needs them.

- ✿ A retreat in February for families involved with Vela Microboards Australia who are moving towards the establishment of an individual Microboard, with their family member. This weekend event was facilitated by Heather Simmons.

What people thought . . .



Plans for the next six months include:

- ✿ Regular phone links between Vela Microboards Australia and Vela Microboards Association, British Columbia, to assist in building understanding of Microboards and address issues as they arise;
- ✿ A forum in April which will include information and family stories. This will be advertised widely and Microboard Allies will be notified personally;
- ✿ The development of a website as a vehicle for continuing to provide information about Microboards and the progress of Vela Microboards Australia.

Please contact Sarah Nickson at Perth Home Care Services (9204 7800, sarahn@phcs.org.au) if you would like to have your name added to the list of Microboard Allies.