

ChILL

ISSUE 2

2009

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Editors Crunch

Welcome to the second issue of ChILL for 2009. It's been a very busy year for us all on RefComm as we've been beavering away with a lot of planning. Unfortunately ChIPS has hit a bit of a low point mid-year with the cancellation of our annual fundraising ball and the end of Kristen's three year stint with us (although we await her return in 2011). However, just because its mid-year doesn't mean we should all be glum and we've also been busy going to socials, leadership training, RefComm and the second lot of ChIPS Intensive.

The Pubs team and myself have been busy planning not only this newsletter but also the Wrapper, which is set to be even better than last years. We have a theme and have begun writing and collecting articles and creative contributions to be included (turn to back page for more info on submitting your own article), so get

thinking and send us something to include in the 2009 Wrapper.

Unfortunately due to some new guidelines that the RCH has instilled, our annual Ball has been cancelled. This news is very heartbreaking to all ChIPERS, as well as members of ChIP In and the wider ChIPS community. In previous years the ball has been a huge success, raising profits of well over \$20,000 each year. Although the ball's cancellation is out of our control, do not despair, as ChIP In and RefComm will be raising funds to support our camps and our fantastic program through other means. I'd like to send out a huge thank you to the members of ChIP In for all the hard work they put into the Ball preparation, and especially to Jess O'Dowd and Di and John Fincher for their efforts in trying to fight this decision. Also thanks to the sponsors we already had for the event, your support

and understanding is appreciated by us all.

Our other sad news is that Kristen will be leaving us for a year or two in order to spend more time with her family. This news is devastating and we will all miss our wonderful, caring, loving and devoted coordinator very much. Kristen has done a lot for ChIPS and particularly for RefComm and her work is appreciated by us all. It is wonderful to have staff who love this program as much as we do and we all wish Kristen the best for the coming years.

Well that's all for now, be safe and happy until I run into you next.

BY Jordan Hammond

RefComm Sub-committee Updates

Camp Committee

Hello ChIPS Community,

Camp committee has been working extremely hard to book an amazing campsite for 2010. In saying this our hard work has finally payed off as we have confirmed a campsite and have begun planning activities and the drafting of the timetable.

Each member will be assigned different roles to complete in regards to activities and the program during each Reference Committee.

We are really quite excited about 2010's camp with bits and pieces coming together nicely. There will be much more to update you all in the next Chill.

See you all then.

Stacey Cumming

ChIPS Connect

Over the past term, the ChIPS Connect team has continued to work on raising awareness about the ChIPS program to young people and the wider community. We conducted a very successful Ward Visit, where we were able to speak to a number of young people with chronic conditions, who were staying at the Royal Children's Hospital on Three East - Adolescent Ward. ChIPS Connect has been updating the Reference Committee Application form. As well as reviewing the Expression of Interest form for advocacy presentations, which we may have a few presentations coming up. During term three we will not be running an Eight Week Group, yet we will have two Groups run in term four. However, we will be assisting with the next ChIPS Intensive. I hope the second half of this year will be just as successful as the first! Thanks to the members of ChIPS Connect and the support of Carly, Meagan and of course Kristen!

Tamara Myers

Socials Committee

BY Abbie Kinniburgh

The socials committee for 2009 kicked off with a big bang with our 1st social for the year in the term.1 holidays. The whole socials team put their enthusiasm and creativity into action and put on a fabulous day for ChIPPERS, we were very proud and excited with how the day turned out for our 1st social. Many excited and curious ChIPPERS showed up on the day wondering what was in store for them. They were entertained with a taste of African culture through a fun, educating and humorous African drumming workshop at Don Bosco Youth Center in Brunswick. The social then progressed on to Melbourne central where ChIPPERS and staff were able to kick back together and enjoy a choose your own lunch in the Melbourne Central food court. The day ended by winding down with the hilarious movie and Melbourne Central Hoyts, the Pink Panther.2. movie. The 1st social for the year proved to be a fun but challenging day for both ChIPPERS and organizers, with hopping on and off trams, venturing to new streets of Melbourne and fitting in around the busy hustle and bustle of the city, but it was also defiantly a big hit for those who were there. The Socials committee is now working on the next social for the term.2 holidays, which will again be held at Don Bosco Youth Center, but with a whole new set of activities, entertainment, food and a chance as always for ChIPPERS to get together and hang out. The next social will also involve mysterious events and, which cannot be missed!! So come along and find out what the next ChIPS social will bring!!

Kristen's Klosing Korner



Hello Everybody!

Welcome to another great edition of Chill.

In the last couple of weeks all CHIP-PERS received a letter from me confirming my upcoming departure from the CHIPS program, with my last day being 15th July. It's a big time in my life, leaving a job I am very passionate about, packing up a house and family, and moving interstate for a couple of years. So it is with a mixture of excitement and sadness that I look ahead to the coming weeks.

Looking back on the last few years, I can honestly say that working with CHIPS has been one of the most challenging times of my life. Challenging in good ways and bad. Some of the challenges have been about the systems and processes that such programs need to work within, some have been related to the financial climate

we find ourselves in ("give us your money"!)). Then there's the challenge of assisting young people with chronic illness to believe in themselves and be who they want to be, and the associated challenge of convincing other people to accept the potential of these young people. And my own personal challenges – learning, accepting, organising, motivating, advocating for, pushing, believing in, and listening to CHIP-PERS and their families. Some days easy, some days hard, but everyday, worthwhile.

What I leave behind as I move up North, is a program that I believe is strong and resilient. CHIPS has funding for the core program for the next 3 years, there are committed, motivated and passionate management, staff and mentors involved, lots of important paperwork filed (policies, procedures, manuals), and exciting plans afoot for evaluating and extending the program. And most importantly it has YOU!

Every person reading this newsletter is important to CHIPS and the future of the program. Whether you are a CHIPPER, family member or friend of a CHIPPER, health professional, or supporter of the program, you play an important role.

I will keep in touch with the program whilst I am away, and will be looking at the website regularly so I know what is going on! And hopefully you'll see me around again in 2011.

Take care and keep smiling,

Kristen

P.S. We have just had some very exciting news in the office that we have been granted some money to run an Open Arts Space project at CHIPS, which will give the opportunity to CHIPPERs to work on some arts projects exploring their illness, and displaying in a public exhibition down the track! Very exciting – stay tuned for further updates.

Goodbye Kristen

By now you would have all heard the sad news that our much beloved ChIPS coordinator, Kristen, has had to make a tough decision and leave us for a short while. The impact Kristen has had has been immense; both on the program and on the young people involved. As a result of this many people wrote in expressing their gratitude and sadness to see such a huge part of what ChIPS is leaving.

We all wish Kristen the best and look forward to her long awaited return...

Kristen,

You have been a true inspiration to those involved in the ChIPS Community. You expanded and improved the program to its potential. A potential we 'older' ChIPPERS all saw from the beginning. That truly is an achievement in itself let alone everything else you have done for us.

You were there when ChIPS needed a co-coordinator the most. Without your support and guidance we may not be where we are today, a committee so strong and hard working. So Thank-you Kristen for everything you have done for the ChIPS Program, whether it be from getting funding grants to keeping a reference meeting professional, every bit counts and we have appreciated every second.

On a personal note, Thank-you for being there just to talk to me when I have needed, I may not have done this often, however if I did you were always willing to listen, no matter the circumstance or time. That means a lot, just to know someone was there. So thanks.

I wish you all the best in Darwin, You will love every minute, I'm quite jealous. Being a whole family again with Marty will be so exciting and rewarding. All the best for the future Kristen. ChIPS is sad to lose such an amazing and integral part of its program but wishes you a healthy and happy journey.

I hope to see you in a few years time as a Mentor. :)

Love Stacey Cumming

Kristen Kappel has not just been the coordinator of the ChIPS program for over 3 years now. She has also been a 2nd mother to us all. A great supporter to each and every individual in the ChIPS program. She really will be missed while she is away, but we will look forward to having her back when she returns from Darwin.

Abbie Kinniburgh



The first time I met Kristen she convinced me to go to a camp before doing anything else with ChIPS. Ever since then it was always evident how much she loved her job, how much ever ChIPPER I met loved her here.

It is sad to see her leave, but it will be exiting to see her come back from her adventures in Darwin.

So, thanks again Kristen for all the opportunities and help throughout the past year. See you again in a few years, hopefully.

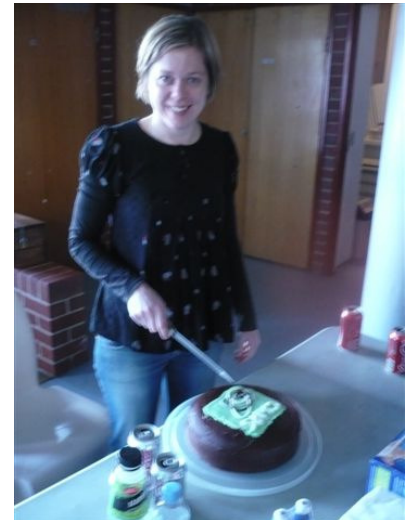
Eliza Masterson

I find these two statements to pretty much sum up Kristen:

"Every single person you encounter in your life has an impact on your life". I have been lucky enough to have been involved with ChIPS for a couple of years now and a what a pleasure it has been to work beside Kristen. There has never been a time that I have walked away after one of our many meetings, chats or camps where I have not been absolutely inspired by her enthusiasm, dedication and love for the work she does.

I always walk away with a bounce in my step and an attitude than we can achieve anything. Kristen certainly "Celebrates success, Overcomes challenges and Creates our future". The pleasure has been all mine.

Thank you and I look forward to working together in the future. Enjoy your new adventure in Darwin.



Jane—mentor

Dear Kristen

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to mentor such a talented, inspiring and beautiful group of young people. I've met people who I believe will stay in my life forever.

It's truly changed my life. ChIPS has given me confidence and the belief that my own illness won't stop me from achieving my dreams.

You are wonderful to work with, I've had so much fun.

Good luck with your move, and goodbye for now.

Love Carly

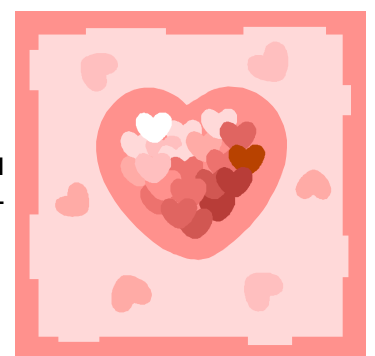
C oordinator
h elpful
I nspiring
P sychologist
S upportive
= **Kristen**

Tamara Myors

Dear Kristen,

It's hard to put what you mean to me into writing purely because of the impact you've had on my life. You've been there for me when times are tough and when they've been fantastic and it the laughter and advice that you have shared with me that I will always remember. Thank you for everything... mostly for giving me chances! I've had the time of my life and I'm going to miss you so much. Thank you for loving the program I love and for making it the best it can be!

Love always, Jordan



Meagan's Musings

Ahhhhh.....so it is already July! We are half way though the year and what a year so far! On Friday July 10, Felipe, Tamara and I successfully finished running the second of the new 2 day ChIPS Intensives, and they were intense! However, they were also very fun and well received by the young people who attended. The most common thing I heard from those who attended was something like 'I have finally found a place I belong and can be myself'. Seven young people attended the April Intensive and nine young people came to the July Intensive. I hope that we see some of them at ChIPS events in the coming months. So now I just need to write up the evaluation and show how fabulous they were so we can get funding to continue them. Thanks to the peer leaders Felipe, Davina and Tamara.

Term 1 and Term 2 8 week groups continued and thanks to the peer leaders who helped me run these, Vassie and Ivano.

Now with the second half of the year looming we will see some changes. I will sadly say goodbye to my colleague, office buddy and friend Kristen but wish her well in her exciting journey ahead. BUT I look forward to the High Challenge camp, keeping the reference committee meetings going, talking to you and working with you all a lot more, welcoming the new ChIPS coordinator and of course the January ChIPS camp. There is so much exciting stuff going on! I am still here Tuesdays and Thursday so give me a buzz or an email if you need to or even just to say hi!

That's all for now.....
Meagan



ChIP In Movie Night

A ChIPS movie fundraiser night was held at the Sun Theatre in Yarraville on Thursday 18 June. The movie was *The Proposal*, a romantic comedy starring Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds.

Sandra Bullock played an uptight book editor about to be deported from the country. She bullied her assistant, played by Ryan Reynolds, into marrying her so she could stay in the country and keep her job. There was a lot of laugh out loud moments, as well as some that touched hearts.

The cinema was almost full - it was great to see so many people there supporting ChIPS.

Thank you to everyone who attended the movie and bought chocolates, and thank you to ChIP In who organised and advertised the event.

BY Carly Findlay

The movie night was a highly successful night with everyone enjoying themselves. A total of \$909.60 was raised thanks to tickets and chocolate sales.

Thanks to everyone who made it (as well as those who bought tickets yet didn't make the night) and special thanks to all the members of ChIP In on behalf of ChIPPERS, we really appreciate the effort you guys put in to help us raise much needed funds.

Cheers





Leadership Training

It started on a Monday. Thinking I was on holidays, I proceeded to get up at a time my brother has yet to have heard of. Why was I getting up so early? For leadership training of course! Hearing promises of the two days being fun and challenging, I did not hesitate in signing up. Getting to the hospital, I was greeted by the group, both new and familiar faces there. Settling in quickly, I proceeded to learn about leadership. A short documentary about Chips really showed me

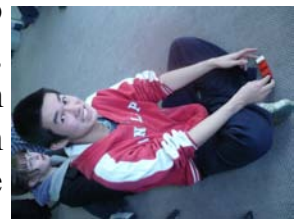
what it was all about, and introducing what we do to the group who came from New South Wales.

After lunch, we were met with a public speaker, Peter Dhu, and he explained the qualities of public speaking and how to improve on them. He showed us a personal video of his troubles with public speaking, which really touched us all, and showed us how anyone could improve on public speaking. His presentation was the highlight of the day.

Day two was much different, requiring

the group to get up and do more active things. Taking on activities which defined what 'COMMUNICATE' meant, we were required to do many things, from passing down instructions to build a Lego model, to acting out random scenes that built on one another. At the end of the day, we were all exhausted, tired but content. I think we all learned something from the two days spent during leadership training.

BY Kevin He



Term Two Social— Don Bosco Youth Centre

The afternoon was a relaxed chance for members to catch up, chill out and have some fun.

We the reference group were up to a lot of mischief planning a surprise cake and pressies for Kristen as this was her last social before she goes on

leave for 2 years. Once all the preparations were ready we presented the many goodies and yeah tears were shed. Then the centre was open to local kids while we were there and the pet rabbits and dog appeared.

Many of us enjoyed time with centre pets who were amazingly tame and well behaved. Some of us bounced on the trampoline, playing billiards, table tennis, playing with the children or just catching up.

BY Vassie Dandanis



Personal Story...by Eliza

“ignoring the questions from other kids about why I was apparently so different to everyone else”

Running in the annual school sports was always amazing, parents and teachers cheering every child on, peers brushing up against me as more and more energy flows through my veins as everything else slows down for a second as I cross the finish line last, always starting first. Every year I told my teachers I could run the whole course ignoring the questions from other kids about why I was apparently so different to everyone else.

Why is your lip funny?, Why are you so short?, Why can't you run properly? I never really noticed my differences or cared about them in primary school. Why anyone thought I was brave was beyond me, I never thought that it was a big deal, I never felt different whether I was in a pram for excursions and camp or not, so it didn't

matter. When I started high school I guess things started to become more real, I started to care that people saw my differences. Because I never explained my illness one of my closet friends at the time told me that some girls disliked me but were too scared of being themselves around me because they thought I could have a heart attack, which is so beyond the truth. As I shrugged off the comments and the realization that my friend believed what the other girls thought made perfect sense I was diagnosed with another thing that made my seemingly normal existence crumble. Scoliosis, just another thing, I thought. But when the orthopaedic technician, who was fitting me with a back brace told me that if I don't wear it, my spine will bend causing major problems maybe even needing a

serious operation, I got really scared, but I got over that.

At the start I was determined to wear the back brace I was fitted with as much as possible. After a few months I had to drop P.E at school due to needing to wear my back brace all the time and basically not being allowed to do any sporting activities anymore, which I was really unhappy about, as I loved sport. The back brace got more and more painful to wear and because I only have one working lung and a heart defect, it constricted my breathing even more.

Half way through year nine I thought people might understand me more if I started explaining aspects of my illness, basically why I was short and

wore a back brace, but after a few people started saying I was making a big deal over nothing I stopped. By year 10 I had lost my confidence as I was too sick to go to school for a lot of that year and whenever I went back to school I felt like I couldn't talk to anyone. I felt while I was away I got left behind so I never went to my year ten formal. This was a real disappointment because I have always wanted to do my formal or Deb but obviously have never been able to.

In October 2007, the end of year 10, my twin, mum and I made the best decision of our lives and moved to Melbourne and around the same time I was told the only step forward for my health would be a heart transplant. Over the last few months of 2007 I saw a couple of different cardiologists, but no-matter what they all said, one thing kept going through my head constantly "this is the

only option, it will get worse" but I wasn't shocked. In the back of my mind, whether I realised it or not, I always thought I would need this one day. Before 2007's end I was given the opportunity to join a couple of peer groups, which I really didn't see the need to do, but eventually the more information I found the more convinced I became that I should give one of the peer groups a go. The ChIPS 2008 camp was my first experience with ChIPS and the first time I had truly had any social outlet without my twin to fall back on, but it was also one of the best things I have ever done, no matter how cheesy that sounds.

After the camp I was told that it might be a better option to have a lung and heart transplant, this has truly made my world spin, but it will be ok. I met someone a few months ago that had a heart transplant, and she was as happy and healthy as someone

could be, although she said 'it was very terrifying, but it's worth it'. If they decide I can have a transplant I will be able to run, dance or even walk for more than two minutes without being puffed, but at the moment I can't worry about what has or hasn't happened yet because I will just worry myself sick, literally.

At the moment I am studying Psychology and Health at the Centre for Adult Education and loving being involved with CHIPS as much as possible.

I used to, and sometimes still think no-one would want to be around me, but Chips, and other things in Melbourne are helping me to see things in a better perspective, and slowly regain some of my confidence that I lost during high school. In the future I'd like to help other young people gain confidence beyond their expectations of them selves.

That's my story. So far...



“
but after a few
people started
saying I was
making a big
deal over
nothing I
stopped
”

Trials and Tribulations of Year 12.

All that drama that comes with it...

I have recently found some very useful and interesting information that really opened my eyes and I thought to myself this would come in very handy to pass onto all of you future VCE students reaching your final years in high school and all the endless nights of study and bad sleeping habits in order reach you goal of getting that enter score that you have your heart set on.

Well you no longer need to think that your world is going to end if you don't get into your dream course because you have to remember

that some of us were, well, to put it simply, crappy students and just couldn't focus on anything and ended up with a lousy score. There are always other ways in which to reach the stars whether it is nursing, the army, or even horticulture, all roads and doors are yours to explore.

Mid year entry is an option if you don't get one of those 25 spots (remember your chances are much better) just don't rely on mid year have it as a back up.

You might even decide to work or

travel for a while before settling down to continue your education.

Trust me when I tell you that when the time is right you will know that you're ready. This isn't meant for everyone just like going straight into TAFE or UNI isn't for everyone, just know that like everyone is different and their personalities and illness' are different so is growth of the mind. Everything has a time and place, so make it a point to be the one in charge of yours. Cheers, **Felipe**



Coco Loco Review

Coco loco is a gourmet and organic chocolate bar located at 219 High St.

Everything on the menu is wheat and gluten free, cholesterol free with no preservatives and vegan, except for the fondue that is made with cheese.

This chocolate bar has a wide range of special treats such as, truffles, drinking chocolate that can be made with dairy, soy or cashew milk, chocolate liqueur, savoury and desert crepes, fondue and coffee. Almost everything you order from this comfortable hide-away the gifted chocolatiers can cater to meet your dietary needs.

When I ventured out

to Northcote to see about this little bar I was surprised to see how comfortable it was inside. It had wooden tables and leather seated bar stools and on the roof it had a skylight, which I personally thought was the loveliest thing ever. As soon as my sister and I took our seats the waiter was taking our orders and answering all my questions and within a few minutes out chocolate delights were on the table before us.

As the truffles had all sold out I tried two different kinds of drinking chocolate and the mousse. The drinking chocolates were enclosed in oval shaped cups that fit perfectly into your hand, and were not

too creamy but still tasted like real drinking chocolate. The milk chocolate tasted exactly like hot chocolate, but did not make me feel sick and the white drinking chocolate was smooth, sweet and according to my sister “the best thing that I have ever tasted”.

The dark chocolate mousse was strong and rich, although it was made from cashew milk it was not nutty at all, very strong dark chocolate but worth a try. There is only one Coco loco in Australia and it is open in the early evening until late, although they do not have eftpos and some things may be a bit pricey it is worth the trip.

BY Eliza Masterson



Liz Dixon Award

THE PUBLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE ARE LOOKING FOR CREATIVE PIECES TO BE SUBMITTED FOR THE 2009 WRAPPER.

ChIPPERS are welcome to submit an array of pieces to be included in the Wrapper. These may include drawings, stories, poems, paintings, photos or anything you would like to submit. Everything will be included to the best of our abilities.

Your piece will then be in the running to win the Liz Dixon Award for most creative submission to the Wrapper. The award is a treasured one in the hearts of ChIPPERS and your name will be announced in the Wrapper at the end of the year and of course you will have your piece published in all its glory.

We also need a front cover photo. Photos must be taken by a ChIPPER and must be of natural things found in our environment... nothing man made must be seen. Photos must be of the highest resolution possible!

Please submit any articles or photos you wish to be included with an informative subject heading to Jordan at:

jkham5@student.monash.edu.au

Help make the Wrapper enjoyable to read!

