



co.as.it.
community
services

insieme

01 | 2024

OUR VISION

To be a leader in the provision of quality, accessible and affordable community care services for the general and CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) communities.

OUR VISION

To be the focal point in Queensland for the promotion and study of the Italian language and culture.



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LETTER FROM THE ACTING CEO



This year marks the 46th year of Co.As.It.'s presence in service delivery across the aged, community, and disability sectors.

Welcome to the first edition of our 2024 magazine.

There is so much to read about what we have been doing since December and it is really gratifying to see how well the machinery of our workdays keep rolling.

It's been a long and sometime challenging journey to keep doing the important work we do in our community here and on the South Coast.

This year marks the 46th year of Co.As.It.'s presence in service delivery across the aged, community, and disability sectors.

You may not know that we provide services to over 5,000 clients per week and that our trained staff of 390 care workers and office staff of 120 is the backbone of many people's independence.

Our staff speak over 50 languages, dedicated to providing the best care to our clients by delivering culturally and linguistically focused services.

We are very proud of our position in the care industry and we thank you for your continued patronage of our organisation, its events, and celebrations.

For many of you, our support started when you were children - attending playgroups, going to holiday care, etc. and now as adults and parents, we are still providing services for your children in Italian classes and other community activities.

It's a heritage that I am very proud of - one that shows how well we fit into the cultural and civic landscape that has evolved over 4 decades.

No doubt we will still be here caring for you as seniors and elders.

I look forward to seeing many of you over the coming year.

Tanina Softa

WHEN CHANGE IS BETTER!

No longer forced to arrange stressful hospital transfers, Patricia repeatedly expresses her gratitude to our clinical team.



For 88-year-old Charles, routine urinary catheter changes had become a dreaded and traumatic experience.

Dependent on a catheter, Charles required replacements every six weeks. However, the insertions were often difficult, leading to failed attempts and frequent emergency room visits.

"It was an incredibly stressful situation," said Charles' wife, Patricia. *"On one occasion, he even had to be transferred between hospitals because the medical team couldn't successfully pass the catheter without ultrasound guidance."*

Desperate for a solution, Patricia approached our clinical nurse leader Shaun for advice on better catheter management for her husband. Shaun connected them with a team member renowned for her expertise in catheterizing male patients.

This experienced nurse's skilled hands have made all the difference.

"She has been successful at passing all catheters without any issues, which has alleviated so much anxiety for both Charles and me," Patricia shared gratefully.

No longer forced to arrange stressful hospital transfers, Patricia repeatedly expresses her gratitude to our clinical team.

Charles and his wife now speak glowingly about the outstanding care they've received.

"We feel so fortunate to have this nurse's assistance," said Charles. *"Her expertise has turned a nightmare scenario into the routine medical care it should be."*

What was once a harrowing ordeal is now a smooth process, thanks to the compassionate clinical team that went the extra mile for one elderly gentleman's comfort and well-being.



ALLIED HEALTH

WE SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE - ANY LANGUAGE!

At the heart of Co.As.It.'s approach lies a multicultural ethos – a staggering 85% of the organisation's staff speaks at least two languages.



Maria eagerly anticipates her weekly physiotherapy session, but it's about much more than just physical rehabilitation.

For this 77-year-old Portuguese woman, the appointment represents a cherished opportunity to connect through a shared native tongue with Ian, one of our Allied Health professionals at Co.As.It.

Though typically described as an introvert who avoids speaking English, Maria's shyness melts away when she speaks with Ian in their mutually beloved Portuguese language.

"Ian takes me for a morning walk to warm up, and during those strolls, we seize the chance to talk about family and life in our own language," Maria shares. *"I miss speaking Portuguese, and I'm not comfortable with English, so I prefer to stay quiet around people whose first language is English."*

The journey that brought Maria and Ian together spans oceans and continents.

In the early 1980s, Maria's family migrated from a small Portuguese village to Brisbane, seeking improved opportunities. Decades later, Ian joined Co.As.It. after making his way from Brazil, driven by a passion to apply his professional skills.

"I feel fulfilled performing the profession I love, and at the same time, I can make a lovely client feel closer to her origins," Ian reflects. In these weekly interactions, physiotherapy transcends mere physical care, fostering a profound bond through a common language and culture.

At the heart of Co.As.It.'s approach lies a multicultural ethos – a staggering 85% of the organisation's staff speaks at least two languages. This linguistic diversity serves as a powerful bridge, narrowing communicative barriers and strengthening the fabric of an ever-growing multicultural community.

For Maria and Ian, their shared Portuguese heritage has blossomed into an unlikely yet beautiful friendship, a reminder that empathy and human connection can flourish when we embrace our differences and find common ground in the most unexpected of places.



DEFYING THE ODDS: YVONNE'S INSPIRING COMEBACK

"She went from a nursing home recommendation to living independently again," Jonas marvels. "I'm excited for her and proud to help create personalised strategies - it's about far more than just exercises."

When the circumstances seemed insurmountable and the prospects bleak, one extraordinary woman's resilience shone through. Yvonne's triumphant journey back to independence stands as a testament to the power of an indomitable spirit.

A harrowing setback

It began in 2023 with a devastating fall that left Yvonne trapped in her apartment for over 10 agonizing hours. Upon her eventual rescue, the diagnosis was grim - cranial bleeding and recommendations for nursing home care. In that pivotal moment, Yvonne faced a life-altering crossroads.

The turning point

But her fierce independence refused to be extinguished. Bolstered by her devoted daughter's support, Yvonne made a resolute choice - she would fight to regain the self-reliant life she once knew.

And so began an incredible odyssey of rehabilitation under the guidance of a dedicated allied health team.

Perseverance personified

Slowly but steadily, Yvonne clawed her way back through grit and perseverance. An occupational therapist's assessment provided essential home equipment, while physiotherapist Jonas Cruz became her unwavering partner on this journey.

"She started venturing out independently, even taking taxis to go shopping weekly at North Lakes," Jonas recounts with admiration. Each small victory propelled Yvonne further, her confidence and capabilities expanding in tandem.

The ultimate triumph

Then, in a crowning moment few dared dream possible, Yvonne achieved the unthinkable last November.

A mere few months after doctors recommended nursing home care, she made a triumphant return to the apartment she had been forced to abandon after her fall.

"She went from a nursing home recommendation to living independently again," Jonas marvels. "I'm excited for her and proud to help create personalised strategies - it's about far more than just exercises."

An enduring legacy

In Yvonne's extraordinary path, we bear witness to the immense power of perseverance over adversity.

Her courage, coupled with the devotion of loved ones and professionals, transformed improbable dreams into reality.

Her tale remains a profound inspiration, revealing how hope can flicker brightest when circumstances seem darkest.



AMICI HOUSE WELCOMES NEW NDIS AND COMMUNITY ART TEACHER KERRY RUSHTON

Amici House recently welcomed artist Kerry Rushton as the new NDIS and Community Art teacher, bringing with her an impressive resume and diverse experience in the art world.

Kerry's professional portfolio is truly remarkable, spanning from painting murals on kindergarten walls in her late twenties to working as a scenic artist on the sets of the acclaimed Matrix movie franchise. Her talented hands have brought to life scenery backdrops for renowned organisations like the Queensland Theatre, Queensland Ballet, and Warner Brothers Studios.

After years dedicated solely to family life, Kerry ventured into the exhilarating world of abstract expressionism, rekindling her thirst for art. She began teaching at paint and sip classes, and from there, became the artist in residence at Monet in Paris Experience last year, teaching workshops on how to paint like the master himself.

Kerry's passion for art and ability to teach it has now led her to a new challenge as the NDIS Art Teacher at Amici House. She believes in being present and

understanding her class to introduce projects that are both challenging and fun. Observing how students use materials and approach tasks is crucial for crafting engaging lessons.

According to Kerry, the most important aspect of the NDIS class is ensuring students have moments of enjoyment, not only from their own creations but also from witnessing their peers' achievements. Creating a safe space with conversations and connections is vital for participants to feel emotionally secure and approachable.

Kerry firmly believes that talent comes from practice, and in order to practice, one must allow themselves to make mistakes. *"The most important thing is not to judge your progress or yourself at the moment, and to allow practice and be committed to it,"* she says.

The NDIS Art Class at Amici House is a welcoming and safe environment where creativity has no limits. Every Monday, participants are encouraged to explore, make connections, and have fun.

For those interested in joining this community of artists and unleashing their creativity, contact the NDIS Team at 07 3624 6100 or ndis@coasit.asn.au.





LATIN DANCE CLASSES

**Every Wednesday
Multi-level, all welcome**



**Only \$5 per class
Bookings are Essential
Direct debit or EFT, no cash.
No Walk-Ins
Ph: Barry (07) 3603 4685
mail@coasit.asn.au**

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QUEENSLAND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME

VIAGGIARE GRATIS SI PUÒ

Lo sapevate che gli anziani possono viaggiare gratis (sì, avete letto bene, **GRATIS**) sui mezzi pubblici del Comune di Brisbane fuori dalle ore di punta? Stiamo parlando di autobus, traghetti e CityCats, dalle 8.30 alle 15.30 e dalle 19 alle 6 del giorno dopo!

Per gli anziani residenti il viaggiare gratis significa potersi spostare e andare a trovare famigliari e amici, e utilizzare le varie infrastrutture messe a disposizione dal Comune.

Per usufruire di questo servizio, bisogna essere in possesso di una Go Card per anziani emessa da Translink, o della tessera per anziani "+go".

Vi consigliamo comunque di verificare se potete viaggiare gratis visitando il sito ufficiale Translink (<https://translink.com.au/tickets-and-fares/concessions/seniors>) o recandovi presso un venditore di tessere.

Il tipo di tessera in Vostro possesso (Go Card o +go) determinerà se avrete bisogno di fondi disponibili sulla tessera per poter viaggiare gratis, o se Vi basterà avere una tessera anche con zero fondi.

Per informazioni, potete visitare il loro sito (<https://translink.com.au/tickets-and-fares/concessions>) oppure telefonare al 13 12 30.

Gli anziani potranno viaggiare gratis secondo le informazioni contenute in questa tabella:

Dal lunedì al venerdì

Autobus comunali
dalle 8.30 alle 15.30 e dalle 19 alle 6 del giorno dopo
CityCats e traghetti
dalle 8.30 alle 15.30 e dalle 19 alle 6 del giorno dopo

Giornate festive infrasettimanali

Autobus comunali - tutto il giorno
CityCats e traghetti - tutto il giorno

Sabato e domenica

Autobus comunali - tutto il giorno
CityCats e traghetti - normali tariffe "off peak"

Giornate festive di sabato o domenica

Autobus comunali - tutto il giorno
CityCats e traghetti - normali tariffe "off peak"

Da notare che i treni non offrono queste agevolazioni, in quanto gestiti dallo Stato e non dal Comune.

Cose da tenere a mente quando si viaggia

- Si dovrà presentare la tessera (Seniors Go Card o Seniors +go) all'inizio e alla fine del viaggio per viaggiare gratis fuori dalle ore di punta
- Se si dimentica di presentare la tessera, verrà addebitata una tariffa fissa alla fine del viaggio. Le tariffe fisse servono a garantire un viaggio equo a tutti i passeggeri della rete TransLink, quindi ricordatevi sempre di presentare la tessera. Le richieste di adeguamento della tariffa fissa possono essere effettuate online o telefonando al numero 13 12 30
- Se viaggiate su una combinazione di mezzi gestiti dal Comune di Brisbane e da altre compagnie, queste agevolazioni verranno applicate solo sui mezzi gestiti dal Comune (bus, CityCats, traghetti). Verranno addebitate le normali tariffe ridotte per la restante parte del viaggio
- Se il tuo viaggio si svolge tra gli orari di punta e quelli non di punta, l'addebito sulla tua go card verrà effettuato in base all'orario in cui hai effettuato l'accesso.



AGED CARE VOLUNTEER VISITORS SCHEME

(formerly called Community Visitors Scheme)

IL VOLONTARIATO NON È PER TUTTI

I veri volontari in questo settore specifico devono possedere, in grandi quantità, pazienza, compassione, ed empatia.



Il ruolo di volontario, soprattutto se a contatto con persone particolarmente vulnerabili come quelle afflitte da demenza, richiede delle qualità speciali che non tutti possiedono.

Sono persone speciali quelle che riescono a vedere oltre le difficoltà fisiche e cognitive che purtroppo fanno parte della vita quotidiana per i malati e vedere l'aspetto umano che ancora risiede dentro loro.

I veri volontari in questo settore specifico devono possedere, in grandi quantità, pazienza, compassione, ed empatia. Devono essere preparati a relazionarsi con dolcezza e comprensione con individui che a loro volta lottano contro la perdita di memoria, confusione mentale, cambi di umore e comportamentali.

È un ruolo questo che richiede una forte resistenza emotiva, in quanto ci si può trovare purtroppo ad assistere al declino costante delle persone a loro care, e allo stesso tempo riuscire a trovare gioia nei pochi e preziosi momenti di connessione. Il volontario deve essere in grado di adattarsi al cambiamento delle circostanze, provare nuovi metodi di connessione, siano essi una lettura ad alta voce, la musica, o una semplice carezza al momento giusto.

Ma soprattutto, i volontari devono provare un profondo rispetto per la dignità ed il valore di ogni individuo, a prescindere dalla loro condizione fisica o mentale.

Devono riuscire a vedere al di là degli ostacoli creati dalla demenza e riconoscere la persona, rispettando e facendo onore alle loro esperienze di vita e alla loro storia.

Abbiamo detto che il ruolo di volontario non è per tutti, ma chi decide di seguire questa strada a cuore e mente aperta riuscirà ad offrire un servizio ineguagliabile, portando luce e conforto ai più vulnerabili membri della nostra società.

Se pensate di possedere questa qualità, fatecelo sapere e Vi aiuteremo a condividerle con qualcuno che ha bisogno di un amico.

AGED CARE VOLUNTEER VISITORS SCHEME

(formerly called Community Visitors Scheme)

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN



The stars must have aligned when Val Raiti, our new volunteer, was introduced to Portofino resident Nildra. It was like a match made in heaven, bringing together two remarkable women with a shared love for life and companionship.

Nildra was over the moon when she found out that she had been selected to receive visits from volunteers through the ACVVS program. Her daughter lived in Sydney, and with no family nearby, Nildra often felt lonely and isolated. But with Val's visits, she had something to look forward to every week.

As we sat with Nildra, she proudly showed us her book of poetry, which she had written herself. The book was filled with acknowledgements and awards that she had received over the years, but what was most impressive was her passion for poetry.

She wanted to share her work with the world and inspire others to pursue their dreams, no matter their age.

Nildra's eyes sparkled with joy as she asked Val and me to make a "pinkie promise" that we would come back

and have coffee with her, listen to her poetry, and share our stories.

For Nildra, it was a chance to connect with someone new and share her love for poetry, and for Val, it was an opportunity to give back to the community and make a difference in someone's life.

It is amazing how a simple visit could bring so much happiness and companionship to someone's life.

The ACVVS program is doing an incredible job of connecting volunteers with elderly residents in residential care or in their own homes and it is heart-warming to see the impact it's making on people's lives.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the ACVVS program, which is funded by the Australian Government, visit our website www.coasit.asn.au for more information.

You never know, you might just meet someone like Nildra and create a meaningful connection bound to last a lifetime.

COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM

AN UNBREAKABLE BOND



At 83 years young, Decia carries an indomitable spirit forged from a lifetime alongside her most loyal companions - horses.

Her profound bond took root at just three years old when she fearlessly mounted her sister's steed, igniting a passion that would burn bright for decades to come.

"My parents saw that fire and gave me my first horse at five. So, I started competing," she recalls, having participated in show jumping, dressage, and western saddle events over the years.

Even a devastating setback at 45, when a stallion's fall left her wheelchair-bound for three years, couldn't break her tenacious spirit. *"When I could, I started riding again and continued until last year. I'll never be without a horse."*

Her cherished 23-year-old horse Midi has been a constant through the highest peaks and lowest valleys. *"Midi loves me so much, she'll do anything just for me,"* Decia shares warmly. *"Each morning when I talk to her, she gives me a big cuddle."*

In Midi's gentle eyes, an eternal understanding lives - this is no ordinary horse-owner bond, but an unbreakable friendship. It's a connection that has instilled profound wisdom in Decia about resilience, courage, and positive endurance through adversity.

"Life's journey has its ups and downs, but we must emerge stronger," she reflects. As thundering hooves echo through her soul, Decia carries horses' unbridled spirit - an eternal truth guiding her path with unwavering clarity.



CIAO PROGRAM

PIZZA MAKING AT ROCKPOOL

Residents of Rockpool Aged Care at Carseldine turned into 'Pizzaioli' after they came together for a fun-filled pizza-making activity in March.

The 'Rockpool Pizzeria' was declared open, as residents created their own pizzas for lunch. The event was a great success, bringing joy and excitement to the residents.

For Italians, food is more than just sustenance. It is a way of life, and thus, the event was an excellent opportunity for the residents to come together and celebrate their love for good food and a few squabbles about what the best toppings were.

The activity included a friendly competition among the residents to see who could make the best pizza. As they prepared their pizzas, the residents sang along to Italian folk songs, creating a beautiful and lively atmosphere.

Many residents were amazed by the taste of their pizzas and claimed that it was the best they had ever had. This was no doubt because the pizzas were cooked in a wood-fired pizza oven, further enhancing the authenticity of the pizzas.

The 'Rockpool Pizzeria' was a great opportunity for residents to showcase their creativity and pizza-making skills by bringing the residents together and fostering a sense of village and belonging. The residents were even allowed to take their leftover pizzas 'home' in a pizza box for afternoon tea!

Overall, the event was a lip-smacking success, and showed how simple community events can bring people together to create lasting memories and full tummies.

Rockpool Carseldine is already planning future events, and we can't wait to see what they'll come up with next!

The residents were even allowed to take their leftover pizzas 'home' in a pizza box for afternoon tea!



COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT SERVICES

AND THE WINNER IS...

We've got some amazing news to share that has us absolutely over the moon!

In February, the Neighbours Every Day organisation hosted a "Tell Us Your Story" competition. It was all about showcasing heart-warming tales of how people and communities come together in inspiring ways.

As soon as we heard about it, we knew we had to enter and share one of the incredible stories from our own community.

With the fantastic help of Juliano, who interviewed one of our beloved clients Elizabeth, we submitted her remarkable experience of participating in activities at our Amici House through the CISS program. Elizabeth's life journey and the profound impact our services have had is truly special.

And you'll never believe what happened next!

Out of all the entries, Elizabeth's powerful story was chosen as the winner for the entire competition - earning the top prize at both the regional and national levels! We were absolutely floored by this incredible achievement.



Not only does this win celebrate Elizabeth's resilient spirit and joyful embrace of life, but it also puts a huge, well-deserved spotlight on the tireless work of our entire team here.

It shows how we really strive to create genuine connections, embrace the diversity within our community, and ensure each individual feels accepted and valued just as they are.

As you can imagine, we're still riding high on this exciting news! Being able to share such an uplifting narrative with the world fills our hearts.

It reinforces why we do this work - to inspire others, educate about the human experience, and help bring people closer together through compassion.

Elizabeth's story perfectly captures the values we cherish and our commitment to amplifying every voice and celebrating the fundamentally shared hopes, dreams, and life experiences that unite us all.

Have a read of her lovely story on the following page, as it appeared in the competition!



COMMUNITY AND INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT SERVICES



Tell Us Your Story QLD & National Winner

Elizabeth's Story

It has been two years since I entered the hospital after an infection that resulted in encephalitis. I lost my movements and the notion of time, as I had been in an induced coma for weeks.

One would imagine that was the hardest blow I could take: being unconscious in a hospital bed for endless days. No, it wasn't, but the fact that my lovely husband wouldn't be able to visit me anymore and hold my hand while I was asleep. Cancer had suddenly taken him away from me.

I was in an isolated place, alone and with no perspective, because nothing grows when it is dark. So, after months, I finally started to see a bright side.

It is funny that I would never have imagined I would finally feel embraced and part of the community after a cup of coffee by chance at Amici House.

It was in this community hub in Brisbane that I began to experience something unique in my life through our supportive women's group called Nourishing the Soul. Socialising is still new to me. I had been in my own little world, doing my little things. Now, it's all opened up.

The sensation of having friends calling over to check on you is indescribable, as is the feeling of meeting other people and listening to their stories. I just want to go out with them and explore. I want to have lunch together at Amici House and learn how their day has been. I want to finally relish the taste of belonging and sharing.



MIND WELLNESS

NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT IS ACTION!

Join Laura and Rita from Co.As.It.'s Mind Wellness Team at their monthly Community Support and Information stall at Market Central Lutwyche.

Whether you need a quick bit of information or ongoing support, Laura and Rita create an inclusive environment so you never have to feel alone.

This is a welcoming space to access guidance, make connections, and get the help you need.

Services include:

- Help accessing My Aged Care, Seniors Cards, and other programs.
- Employment, education, and training support.
- Referrals for counselling, financial aid, drug/alcohol services.
- A compassionate ear for grief, family issues, dementia, and more.
- General advice and connections to local resources.

Stop by for reassurance, validation, and referrals to organisations that can provide personalised care.

All are welcome - including mothers and children looking to chat and uplift one another. Don't go it alone when help is just around the corner.

Drop into the Community Support and Information stall and get connected to a network of caring professionals.

Market Central Lutwyche
Every 2nd Thursday
10:30am - 12:30pm



QUEENSLAND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SCHEME

BRIDGING THE LANGUAGE DIVIDE

For Mary, a Syrian client new to Australia, when language barriers threatened to isolate her, the Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS) through Co.As.It. built that powerful bridge.

Arriving with very limited English, routine tasks like medical appointments or grocery shopping became overwhelming obstacles without a guiding hand.

But the dedicated QCSS team gave Mary a voice and reclaimed her independence. For Arabic-speaker Mary, this personalised care has been utterly transformative. Her workers go to extraordinary lengths to bridge the language divide, addressing every interaction with clarity and compassion. As Mary shared, *"I am very satisfied with the services delivered by Co.As.It."*

Mary's devoted community care workers became indispensable partners - organising appointments, liaising with health professionals, and ensuring not a single need went unmet.

But their role extends far beyond just practical communication. These caring individuals forge bonds of friendship, reduce isolation, and empower clients like Mary to integrate seamlessly into the bustling Brisbane lifestyle.

Therein lies QCSS's true power: breaking barriers, celebrating diversity, and creating an inclusive world where everyone has a voice. Whether it's

assisting with medical needs, reducing isolation through social activities, or connecting clients to critical resources, the team's efforts illuminate a path forward for all people, regardless of their language or cultural background.

QCSS exemplifies how compassion, bolstered by a collective spirit of understanding, can unite a community. Contexts and traditions and humanity override division and lives become enriched, not isolated, by diversity.

In our rapidly evolving society, programs like QCSS are invaluable forces for change - reminding us that overcoming communication barriers opens doors to empowerment, belonging and holistic wellbeing for all.



OUR COMMUNITY

A VIBRANT CELEBRATION OF SISTERHOOD

The air was electric with excitement as a flowery-vibrant mixture of pink and purple set the tone for Co.As.It.'s remarkable International Women's Day celebration.

On March 2nd, the Plaza Terrace Room at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre was transformed into a charming oasis where hundreds of women gathered to uplift, empower, and most importantly, celebrate one another.

As guests arrived, the delightfully decorated venue beckoned them in with IWD light signs and whimsical flower walls - the perfect picturesque backdrops to capture cherished memories of the day.

Animated by the dynamic energy of our MC - Television personality Kim Skubris, the room buzzed with connection, networking, and a palpable sense of sisterhood.

Over the course of five joyous hours, the event treated attendees to a two-course lunch, refreshing prosecco, and a dazzling fashion parade curated by none other than Laura Churchill of Brisbane Fashion Month fame.

Models graced the runway showcasing fabulous outfits from celebrated brands like Orange Sherbet, Anannasa, Sacha Drake, Styling You The Label, and The Wardrobe—Formal Hire.

But the true heart of the celebration went far beyond the spectacular displays of fashion and decor. In keeping with tradition, the stage welcomed a series of influential and esteemed female speakers who inspired with their insights and empowering messages.

The Honourable Grace Grace, Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Industrial Relations, and Racing, spoke poignantly about the vital role women play within families, society, and of course, the political sphere.



OUR COMMUNITY

Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner championed the inclusive spirit of the female community in Brisbane. Meanwhile, Italian Consul for Queensland and the Northern Territories Luna Angelini Marinucci issued a heartfelt call for an unbiased, equal world.

As the messages of solidarity resonated through the room, guests opened their hearts - and wallets - for a worthy cause.

Raffle tickets sold quickly, with proceeds benefiting Co.As.It.'s vital Mind Wellness Program providing counselling, dementia support, and other critical services to the community.

Over 30 prizes found new homes that day, including the ultimate luxury - an Italian getaway valued at \$2,500 for one incredibly fortunate guest.

As the event drew to a close, Co.As.It.'s International Women's Day left attendees feeling uplifted, empowered, and reminded of the beauty that blossoms when women join together in celebration of one another.



OUR COMMUNITY



HOME CARE PACKAGES | SOUTH COAST

HER NAME IS RESILIENCE

We've all had those mornings - you wake up and instantly your heart starts pounding as you remember something crucial you forgot to take care of. For Hannah, a devoted home care coordinator, those moments are when she shines brightest.

Her client Warwick knows he can count on her unwavering support, no matter what.

"Knowing Hannah will always answer gives me such reassurance when I need her," Warwick shares lovingly. You see, what makes their relationship so special is the profound trust and deep bond they've formed over the years.

One fateful morning, Warwick realised he had an urgent cardiologist appointment but had neglected to coordinate his care for that day. As panic started to set in, he remembered his lifeline - Hannah.

Even though the office was still closed, Warwick knew she would have his back. Hannah epitomises the word "selfless."

Without a second thought, she kicked into high gear - leaving her own home early to ensure she could accompany Warwick and get him wherever he needed to go. And thankfully she did, because what happened next required her heroic calm.

At the appointment, the cardiologist insisted Warwick receive emergency scans at a private hospital immediately. Most people would crumble under that immense pressure and sudden time crunch, but not the extraordinarily capable Hannah. With only half an hour's notice, she manoeuvred every piece into place so Warwick could make it to the scans.

While he was able to remain centred and focused, Hannah worked her magic behind the scenes, getting him settled at the hospital, meticulously taking notes on his care instructions, and ensuring this devastating surprise turned detour caused as little upheaval as possible.

For Warwick, Hannah's actions went far beyond that day's remarkable feat. *"Her assistance was fundamental to my wellbeing after my neurological event last year,"* he professes. *"I feel blessed to have such an attentive, caring person in my life."*

In Hannah, Warwick found far more than just a home care coordinator - he found a friend, a lifeline, a guardian angel.

"Her assistance was fundamental to my wellbeing after my neurological event last year," Warwick professes. *"I feel blessed to have such an attentive, caring person in my life."*



Their bond transcends the professional realm, powerful because it is built on trust, compassion, and Hannah's extraordinary capacity to always rise to the occasion.

She is resilience personified. She is the calm within the storm. And for Warwick, she is the ultimate reminder that even in our darkest hours, pockets of unwavering support can pull us through.

At the end, all it takes is one person who genuinely cares.

STRUTTING LIKE PEACOCKS!



The February Outings to Sunshine Beach and the Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) via Stellarossa Cafe at Morayfield, for the North and Southside Groups, were nothing short of hilarious. Here are some of the highlights:

The day started out with threatening rain, but it ended up hot and sunny, which was a blessing for everyone. However, things took a hilarious turn when several of the ladies from the Southside group ventured off to the shops after morning tea. They all returned with a "one size fits all" dress that they tried on while waiting for lunch at the Sunshine Beach SLSC.

The men who were enjoying the parade didn't feel that they should be excluded from the show and asked



AGED CARE | SOCIAL OUTINGS

if they too could have their own parade, which caused much laughter amongst the group and the staff of the club. The sight of grown men strutting their stuff in oversized dresses was a sight to behold and had everyone in stitches.

After the parade, a delicious lunch followed by mango sorbet was enjoyed by all, as it helped cool everyone down. Clients ventured off to do some more shopping, while others had a short walk to the ocean. Some played the pokies or Italian cards, and the rest of us just enjoyed a general catch-up. It was a lovely combination of activities to suit everyone's tastes.

As we sat around the table, enjoying each other's company, we couldn't help but marvel at how much fun we were having. It's amazing how a few funny moments can create a burst of happiness.

So, if you're looking for a fun and hilarious way to spend your day, join our next outing. Who knows, you might end up strutting your stuff in an oversized dress, just like the men at the Sunshine Beach SLSC!



Offrite assistenza e supporto a un familiare o amico?



Il Portale dell'assistente (Carer Gateway) fa per voi



Offrite assistenza e supporto a un familiare o amico che ha una disabilità, una malattia, una malattia mentale oppure che è una persona fragile a causa dell'età?

Vi aiuterebbe avere dei servizi che vi supportano al fine di continuare a essere disponibili per la persona che supportate?

Se avete risposto di sì a una di queste domande, Carer Gateway fa per voi.

Che cos'è Carer Gateway e a chi si rivolge?

Carer Gateway offre servizi gratuiti di supporto e informazioni alle persone che offrono assistenza e supporto a un familiare o amico che ha una disabilità, una malattia, una malattia mentale oppure che è una persona fragile a causa dell'età.

Non importa se ricevete o meno una sovvenzione governativa, potete comunque accedere a Carer Gateway perché, dopo tutto, ogni situazione di supporto è diversa.

Alcuni assistenti si prendono cura di un'altra persona 24 ore al giorno e la aiutano nella vita quotidiana, mentre altri supportano le persone per alcune ore con le mansioni quotidiane.

Come vengono erogati i servizi?

I servizi di Carer Gateway per gli assistenti nelle comunità locali vengono erogati da svariate organizzazioni in tutta l'Australia.

I servizi vengono forniti di persona, online o telefonicamente.

Come posso accedere ai servizi?

Chiamate il numero 1800 422 737 dal lunedì al venerdì dalle 8:00 alle 17:00 ora locale, per parlare con il fornitore di servizi Carer Gateway della vostra zona. Vi spiegheranno la vostra situazione e vi aiuteranno ad accedere a servizi specifici per le vostre esigenze.

È possibile accedere ai servizi online e a ulteriori informazioni consultando il sito web di Carer Gateway: carergateway.gov.au.

Quali servizi sono a disposizione?



Coaching

Imparate nuovi modi per gestire lo stress e migliorare il vostro benessere.

- **Coaching autodidatta** – seguite i corsi online al vostro passo.
- **Coaching di persona** – incontratevi con un coach nella vostra zona.



Counselling

Se vi sentite stressati, tristi o arrabbiati, un counsellor può parlarvi della vostra situazione e aiutarvi.

- **Di persona** – parlate individualmente o in gruppo con un counsellor nella vostra zona.
- **Consulenza telefonica** – parlate con un counsellor al telefono.



Assistenza di sollievo

Se vi ammalate o vi fate male inaspettatamente e non potete continuare a prendervi cura della persona a cui prestate assistenza, i servizi di emergenza sanitaria possono intervenire e prendersi cura di loro mentre vi riprendete. Chiamate il numero 1800 422 737 in qualsiasi momento per richiedere il sollievo di emergenza.



Connettetevi ad altri assistenti in situazioni simili

Incontrate persone che come voi si prendono cura di un familiare o amico. Condividete storie, conoscenze ed esperienze per imparare e sostenervi a vicenda.

- **Di persona** – unitevi a un gruppo di persone nella vostra zona che si prendono cura di un familiare o di un amico.
- **Comunità online** – unitevi ai gruppi di chat online e parlate con altre persone che a loro volta si prendono cura di un familiare o di un amico.

carergateway.gov.au

Connettiamo gli assistenti  ai servizi di supporto

'Siete più forti di quanto immaginate. Prendetevi cura di voi stessi e fidatevi del vostro istinto.'

Pam, assistente di suo figlio



Corsi di formazione online

Imparate nuove abilità per prendervi cura di un'altra persona e di voi stessi. Scoprite nuovi modi per gestire lo stress e le questioni legali e per migliorare la salute e la sicurezza. Ogni corso tratta un argomento diverso e potete completarli online al vostro passo.



Pacchetto di supporto su misura

Assistenza e servizi sono creati su misura per aiutarvi nel vostro ruolo di assistente.

Potreste ricevere gratuitamente:

- servizi o attrezzature per continuare la vostra formazione, ad esempio lezioni, materiale didattico o corsi di formazione
- sollievo programmato, grazie al quale un fornitore di servizi interviene per prendersi cura del vostro familiare o amico mentre vi prendete una pausa
- servizi di cucina e pulizia
- assistenza per fare la spesa
- trasporto per aiutarvi a svolgere commissioni quali andare a visite mediche o fare acquisti.

Come posso contattare Carer Gateway?

Chiamate Carer Gateway al numero **1800 422 737** dal lunedì al venerdì dalle ore 8:00 alle 17:00 per parlare con il vostro fornitore di servizi locale in merito al supporto e ai servizi a vostra disposizione. Il sollievo di emergenza è disponibile 24 ore su 24, sette giorni su sette allo stesso numero.

Se necessitate di informazioni in una lingua diversa dall'inglese, chiamate il servizio di Traduzione e Interpretariato al numero **131 450**.

Per le persone non udenti o con problemi di udito o difficoltà di linguaggio, chiamare il National Relay Service al numero **133 677**.

I servizi online e ulteriori informazioni sono disponibili al sito web di Carer Gateway: carergateway.gov.au

DID YOU KNOW?

SOME INTERESTING FACTS

Italian Immigration in QLD: Stanthorpe

Stanthorpe stands out for its vibrant range of cafes, boutique stores, and galleries. Lying in the middle of farmlands, fruit orchards, and vineyards, this Granite Belt city can be considered the cradle of Italian immigration in Queensland.

The connection between Italy and Stanthorpe dates back to the first half of the 20th century. After World War I (1914-1918), soldier settlements were established to the north of the town. During and after World War II (1939-1945), a significant number of Italian prisoners of war and migrants arrived.

According to ABC News, of the estimated 350,000 Italians who were captured or surrendered in North Africa during World War II, more than 1,500 prisoners were sent to Queensland to work on farms. Some of them worked in orchards and table grape vineyards.

As the Italian community started to be built, wine production in the region has increased considerably—for home enjoyment and to supply family and friends in the northern Queensland cane fields.

Data published by the Sydney Morning Herald points out that of the town's 15 percent non-Australian-born population, 65 percent are Italian.



Historical facts that took place in April

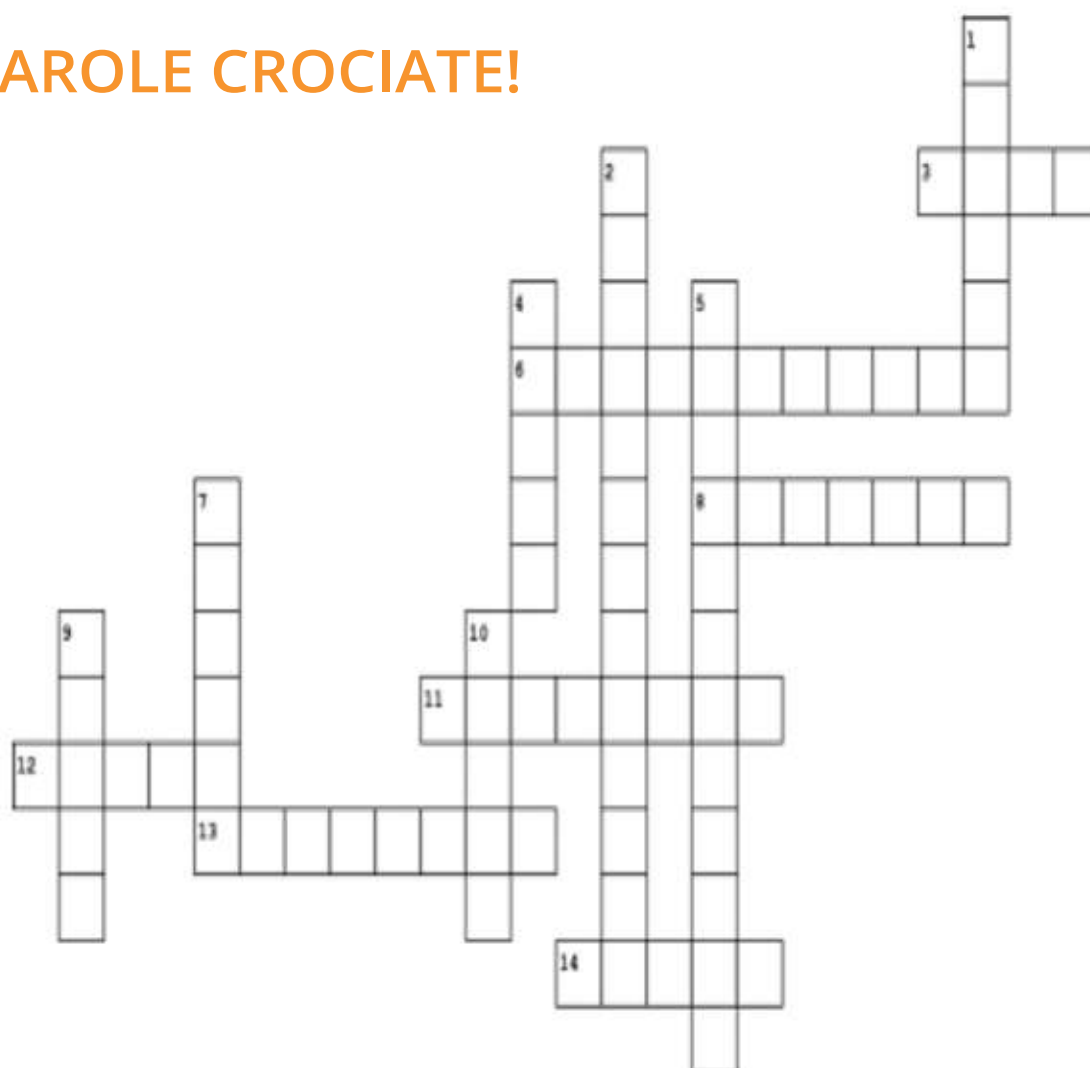
- The Titanic sank on April 15, 1912.
- The dictator Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria.
- Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924), leader of the Russian Revolution of October 1917, was born in Simbirsk, Russia.
- The Tasmanian General Post Office opens in Hobart, Tasmania.
- Il Giorno della Liberazione (Liberation Day) marks the end of the Italian Civil War and the end of the Nazi occupation in 1945.



Trivia

1. What Italian city was Michelangelo raised in? *Florence*
2. Of what nationality was explorer Captain James Cook? *British*
3. What year did Pinocchio first appear in published media? *1883*
4. How long is the Great Wall of China? *21,197 kilometres*
5. Between which two African countries is there a land that no one owns? *Egypt and Sudan*

LE PAROLE CROCIATE!



Orizzontale

3. Si sente non mangiando abbastanza
6. La pasta e il riso ne hanno tanti
8. Si contano con attenzione
11. Ti dice quanto pesi
12. Contengono molto zucchero
13. La voglia di mangiare
14. Lo salta chi è a digiuno

Verticale

1. Olio e burro ne sono esempi
2. Esperto dell'alimentazione sana
4. Importante per rimanere idratati
5. Può sostituire lo zucchero
7. Scende perdendo peso
9. Si fa per stare in forma
10. Si segue per dimagrire

LOTS OF ACTIVITIES AT OUR CENTRES

Valentine's Day was an explosion of red hearts!



Australia Day - everyone loved the flags!



Let's not forget that furry little rabbit - the source of our annual 2kg weight increase!



Leprechauns were lending clients their hats for St. Patrick's Day



Artists in creative mode



AGED CARE BRISBANE | SOCIAL ACTIVITY GROUPS

VALENTINO REACHES 102!

"I remember asking my daughter what I would be doing in a group for older people. I couldn't have been more wrong."

An article is definitely not enough to do justice to the stories of Valentino Pozzetti's 102 years of life. Owner of a captivating smile and strong charisma, Valentino commemorated his life milestone while being surrounded by friends and family at Casa Aurelia on April 9.

The WW2 veteran rules out the myth behind the secret of longevity. *"There is no formula to live a long life; it is only sacrifice. It is a constant battle that you fight over your entire life,"* says Valentino. As time goes by, he says, the body simply grows stronger.

Valentino knows exactly what a battle is. At 20 years of age, he was sent to fight in Russia alongside the Italian army during the most lethal conflict in human history: World War II.

After the war, Valentino embarked on a new chapter, packing his belongings and crossing the ocean in search of a fresh start. *"I have a wonderful life in Australia. I've never regretted a moment,"* he reflects, a testament to his adventurous spirit and positive outlook.

It was in Australia that Valentino built his life and formed a family. *"My grandpa is simply amazing. He is a man of many good stories. It is a privilege to have him in our lives. He has always been there for us,"* says Valentino's granddaughter, Sarah.

Valentino had always been reluctant to join Casa Aurelia or any other social group for his age group. He wanted to mingle with younger people. *"I remember asking my daughter what I would be doing in a group for older people. I couldn't have been more wrong."*

"I would never have imagined that I would meet so many good people in one place. I'm really happy to know them all. Casa Aurelia is the best place for immigrants to make friends and have fun. I feel at home here."

In fact, at his party organised by Co.As.It., he was so pampered that he even said that this was his best birthday celebration.

Valentino, it is a true honour to be part of your life. It is a privilege that we at Co.As.It. are proud to have.



FRED IS 100 YEARS OLD!

An extraordinary celebration took place this month at our South Coast Social Activity Centre, honouring the 100th birthday of beloved client Fred Allsopp.

Born on March 2nd, 1924, over the past 100 years, Fred has witnessed remarkable progress, from technological advancements to social and cultural shifts that have transformed the world around him.

Fred's milestone was commemorated on March 5th with a festive gathering attended by family including two of Fred's children visiting from New South Wales, friends, and the centre's community. The festivities culminated with a magnificently crafted birthday cake.

The atmosphere was filled with joy as the centre was adorned with vibrant decorations, including giant balloons spelling "Happy 100th Birthday." Adding to the celebratory atmosphere the renowned local choir performed a special list of Fred's favourite tunes, including "You Made Me Love You" – a song he once sang to his late wife.

As the choir's melodies filled the air, clients danced with unbridled enthusiasm. Despite his remarkable age, Fred's passion for life remains undimmed. He actively participates in the centre's activities like indoor bowls, bingo, and dancing during exercise sessions, often requesting Johnny Cash tunes. His determination to maintain physical well-being is truly inspiring.

Currently using a walker, Fred has set an ambitious goal: to walk short distances unassisted. With unwavering support from his physiotherapist, he diligently works towards this remarkable feat, exemplifying his indomitable spirit.



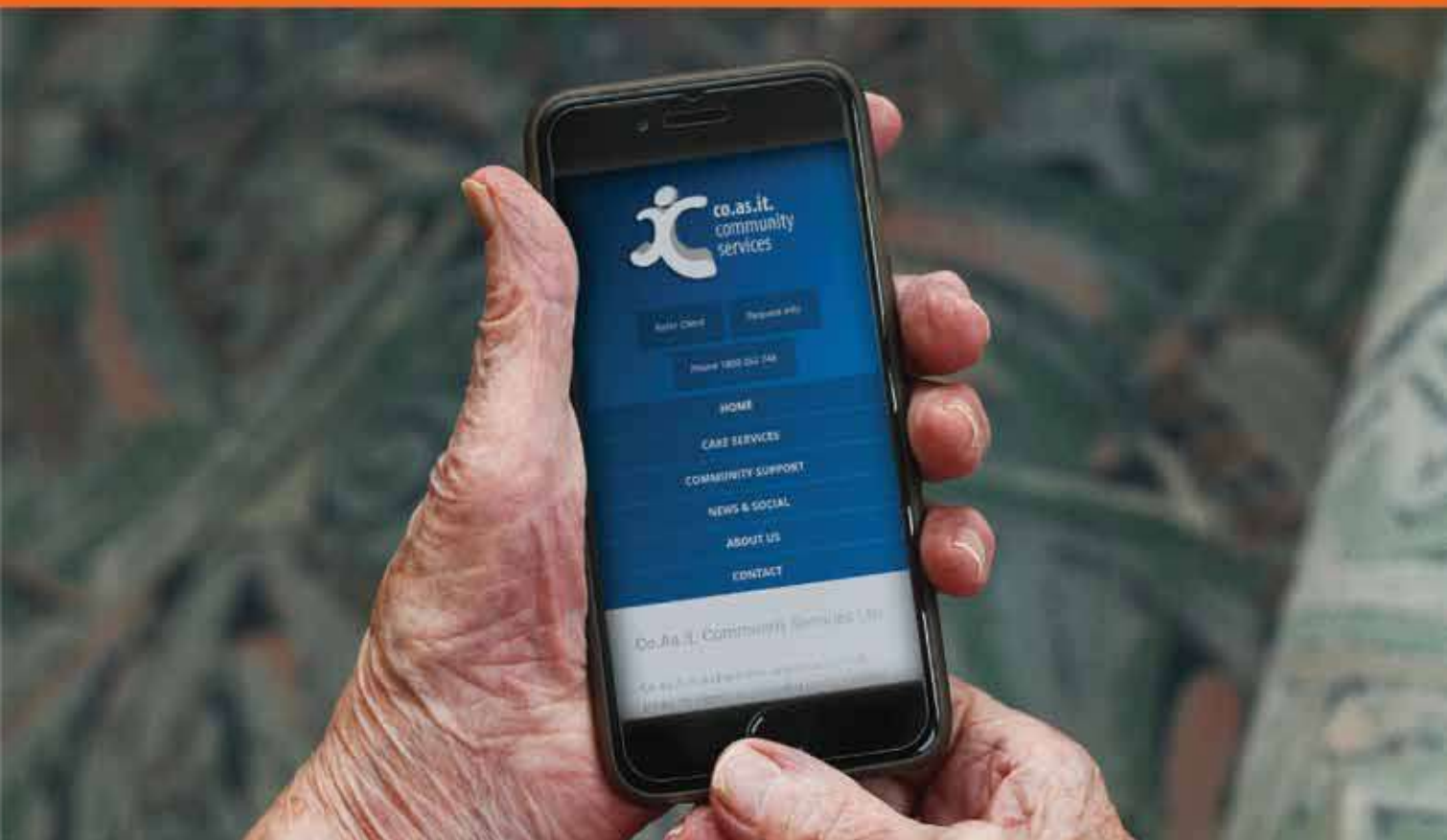
As we celebrate this incredible milestone, Fred's life serves as a shining example of spirit, joy, and commitment to living life to his fullest.





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OUR COMMUNITY

CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSITY

Traditional dishes, different flags and colours set the tone of the Co.As.It.'s office as part of the annual Harmony Day celebrations.

On April 4, staff celebrated the country's cultural diversity with food, music and information.

Over 35 dishes, including desserts from all parts of the world, were relished - pasta, pies, rice, bread and many more. Staff members also wore traditional clothes, accentuating the multicultural aspects of the celebration.

Step into our office and embark on a linguistic journey.

Did you know that a staggering 85% of our staff are fluent in more than one language? From Italian to Arabic, Portuguese to Korean, our diverse linguistic landscape is a testament to Co.As.It.'s dedication to supporting culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Harmony Day is an Australian Government program that centres on the message that "Everyone belongs", reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to all Australians.

Since 1999, thousands of Harmony Day events have been staged in childcare centres, schools, community groups, churches, businesses and federal, state and local government agencies across Australia.



ITALIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

CANZONI A TEMA: CIN CIN SOTTO LE STELLE

This short course, offered fortnightly on Saturday mornings, continues to be very popular thanks to the informal setting and thoughtfully-designed classes aimed at improving student pronunciation and vocabulary.

The theme for the first 'Canzoni a Tema' of 2024 is "Cin cin sotto le stelle".

Through songs linked to the theme, students learn new language and fun facts about Italian ways to celebrate and make a toast.

Students thoroughly enjoy the combination of cultural aspects and language activities were very keen to prepare for their grand finale at the end of March.

Festeggiamo! Salute! (Let's celebrate! Cheers!)

IILC
ITALIAN
LANGUAGE
CENTRE



ITALIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

LANGUAGE IMMERSION AT ILC



The new 2024 school year has been going for a few months and ILC's team has already organised a number of language immersion excursions for students of Italian across all grades, in the Brisbane and Gold Coast areas as well as on the Sunshine Coast.

On Friday 23 February ILC's teachers Francesca and Giovanna had the privilege of working with a group of year 9 and year 10 students from Stretton State College.

They engaged in a session packed with hands-on activities on the topic "Il tempo libero" (Leisure time). New idiomatic expressions were quickly mastered and a lot of fun was writing "frasi matte" (crazy sentences), combining parts of speech in a creative way.

It was a productive learning experience for everyone: students, their dedicated school teachers (who also organised Nutella croissants for morning tea - yum!), and the staff at ILC.

It was most rewarding seeing students grow in confidence when speaking la bella lingua!

ILC's support for Italian programs in Queensland schools is made possible through funding from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MAECI [Ministero Affari Esteri e della Cooperazione Internazionale].

To find out more simply visit the ILC website www.italianlanguagecentre.org

ITALIAN LANGUAGE TEACHING

“CARNEVALE” CELEBRATIONS AT ILC

The ILC team had a blast celebrating Carnevale 2024! In Italy, Carnevale is a vibrant and festive celebration, filled with colourful costumes, parades, and delicious food.

Here in Brisbane the excitement began at St. Columba's Primary School on Tuesday 6 February with a lively parade and costume contest organised by Italian teacher Isabella Soto.

ILC's teacher Giovanna had the honour of selecting the best costumes and awarding special certificates to recognise the creativity of students and teachers.

The Year 6 group was triumphant with a range of costumes inspired by culinary culture, particularly evident in Aurora Brea's innovative crown and gown made of pasta.

In ILC's weekly Playgroup sessions, the Carnevale spirit was very much on show with children enjoying engaging activities created by their teacher Francesca.

Finally, ILC's adult students also had the opportunity to join in Carnevale fun during their first evening class of the new year.

Lively and entertaining activities organised by teacher Giovanna brought many smiles, setting a delightful tone for the start of Semester 1.



Servizi comunitari per anziani e giovani bisognosi di sostegno.

**Avete bisogno di aiuto nei lavori domestici?
Avete bisogno di aiuto per cucinare?
Volete incontrare nuovi amici?
Assistete qualcuno a domicilio e avete bisogno di aiuto?**

Il Co.As.It. Community Services fornisce assistenza alle persone anziane e ai giovani dal 1987 e il nostro personale esperto e qualificato è capace di prestare un servizio culturalmente e linguisticamente adeguato.

La maggioranza del nostro personale è bilingue e capace di assistervi nel vostro ambiente familiare in casa vostra.

I nostri gruppi sociali offrono un pasto casalingo e la possibilità di incontrarsi con gli amici e chiacchierare dei tempi andati.

Attività di arti manuali, canzoni e balli, tombola e gite fanno parte del nostro programma giornaliero.



Contattate il nostro centro al

3624 6100

per ulteriori informazioni



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