

## Family Support Services

We believe that strong families are the key to strong communities. Interchange Outer East offers programs to support every member of the family of a person with a disability individually, and the family as a whole.

### Overview

Interchange Outer East (IOE) offers a variety of programs and support groups to the parents, carers and siblings of a person with a disability. From evening workshops to day and night time outings, to camps and weekends away, there is something for everyone and everyone is welcome.

Family members of a person with a disability often experience similar issues of isolation, lack of social contact, lack of support, difficulties in navigating the disability services sector and accessing the information and resources available.

IOE Family Support Services programs aim to strengthen families through social connection, information sharing, networking and fun, while emphasising the importance of the family unit in all stages of life.

Family Support Programs are offered to any family who has a child with a disability. The programs are not restricted to those families who are registered with IOE.



*“ Families who are supported by their peers and connected to their community are better equipped to share the joys and face the challenges of raising a child in today’s world. ”*

- Fred Brumhead, CEO



## Family Support Services



**Social support, recreational activities and resources for families of a person with a disability**

Supporting the wellbeing of families by providing opportunities to relax, share resources and information and remain connected to their peers and community.

**Interchange Outer East**

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Your local NDIS registered service provider

## Programs

**Sibling Support** - Thanks to Freemasons Victoria, the Sibling Support Program provides a range of camps and day activities for siblings of a child with a disability. Throughout the year the program is broken down into different age groups so the relationships can develop with other kids of a similar age. Two all-ages siblings camps are also offered each year to bring everyone together. Generously supported by Freemasons Victoria.

**Mums Social Group** - Mothers, stepmothers and other female carers of a child with a disability are invited to join other mums at a variety of day and night time activities such as lunches and dinners, river cruises, live shows, markets and local events. Activities run monthly with one weekend away per year. Mums benefit from having a social outlet, reducing feelings of isolation while encouraging friendships and time away from the stresses of daily life.

**Dads Social Group** - All dads, stepdads and other male carers, who have a child with a disability are invited to join the Dads Social Group. This is a welcoming, fun space for dads to engage with each other and develop friendships. Activities run monthly with one weekend away per year. We hope to create solidarity, have fun and offer the chance to unwind and be yourself. Newcomers are welcome at any time.



**Grandparent Carers** - Many grandparent carers face issues of social isolation, physical and emotional exhaustion, difficulties navigating the sector and sourcing information & support to assist them in their caring role. The program offers social opportunities to meet with other grandparent carers, attend activities with the children in their care, information sharing and workshops.

**Carer Support Groups** - These groups aim to provide support, information and resources in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Support groups also involve a variety of social and recreational activities, as well as workshops, social sport and guest speakers. Groups cover the wider Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges areas. Also includes one weekend retreat per year.

**Family Support** - Family Camps and days are an opportunity for the whole family to relax and spend time together in a supportive environment with assistance from staff and volunteers. Generally two-to-four family camps are held per year, with a mix of regular families and those who are new to Interchange Outer East.

**Host Program** - The Host Program matches a child with a disability, aged to 18 years, with a volunteer host who shares their home and time with that child on a regular basis. The program provides opportunities for new experiences and social contact, involvement in a wider community and a break from home. Parents enjoy some respite with the reassurance that their child is being cared for in a loving and welcoming family or friendship situation.

**Training and Workshops** - IOE regularly offers training and workshops for families in health & wellbeing, industry updates & information and other disability related issues.



## Accessing Programs

IOE Family Support Programs are open to all families who have a child with a disability. Families do not need to be registered with IOE to access these programs. Places are limited in all cases and application forms are available on the Interchange Outer East website, Facebook page and monthly e-newsletter.

## Cost

IOE aims to keep Family Support Services costs low to ensure the programs are widely accessible for families. Cost varies between programs due to different funding arrangements and one off-funding that may become available. Some programs and events are fully funded with no cost to families, some programs require a co-contribution and some run at full cost. Costs for each program/event will be advertised on the website and application form in each instance.

## Contact

For more information contact the Family Support Services team on 9758 5522 or [familysupport@ioe.org.au](mailto:familysupport@ioe.org.au)

Further information and online application forms are also available on the IOE website - [www.ioe.org.au](http://www.ioe.org.au)