Imagining Better

araluen.org

Investing 2,564 hours in what matters most - Active Support is changing the way we work - empowering people to take control of their lives and helping Araluen build a stronger future for all.

Better support, brighter futures

Exciting news! We are currently working with La Trobe University to train all our support staff in Active Support – a proven approach that represents a major step forward in how we support people to fully lead and participate in their lives.

Why Active Support?

The reason? When our staff use Active Support, people experience more choice, control and genuine opportunities to grow and participate – resulting in real, lasting change.

Active Support is more than a method of working – it's our commitment to rights, choice, and inclusion.

We'll have more to share about Active Support later in the year. For now, check out some stories to see how people are already achieving great things – big and small – as we embed Active Support across all our services.

Active Support is smiles that say ***"I got this!"***

LEARN MORE ON ***PAGE 3***

A word from Tam

Bring on 2025 – a year of possibility, purpose and people!

As we step into a new year, I want to begin by celebrating the incredible people who shape Araluen – our participants, staff, families, and supporters. Your energy, resilience and belief in what's possible continue to drive us forward.

2024 was a year of challenge, change and growth. Together, we've strengthened services and built new ways for people to thrive. One of the most inspiring shifts has been the growing impact of **Active Support** across our services. It's creating space for people to do more, learn more, and feel more connected. Whether it's preparing meals, joining creative workshops, or getting out into the community with confidence, every moment has potential!

At **Chancez Cafés**, you can now see people stepping up and taking charge, from confidently welcoming customers and taking orders to expertly running the coffee machine. The results aren't just great cups of coffee; they're powerful moments of independence and inclusion.

We're also seeing the life-changing impact of our **Positive Behaviour Support** team, with more people achieving goals in safer, more consistent ways. Our ***Let's Talk*** zero tolerance to abuse commitment continues to ensure that everyone connected to Araluen is respected, heard and protected.

This year, we'll deepen this work and invest in initiatives that make a real difference – including more staff training, new partnerships, and sustainable solutions to keep essential supports strong.

Thank you for standing with us and being part of this journey. Here's to another year of doing great things together.

Tamara Cattach
Chief Executive

Support us - drive opportunity this EOFY!

At Araluen, our buses are more than just transport – they're a vital link to community life, opportunity, and independence. One of our trusty vehicles has served us well, but it's time for a replacement.

So, this end of financial year, please help us raise $75,000 to purchase a new accessible bus so the people we support can continue to travel safely, comfortably, and with confidence.

Gifts over $2 are tax deductable.

Give online via HERE via GiveNow (www.givenow.com.au/araluenbus) or phone 1300 020 625

Active Support has arrived - and it's already working!

By the end of 2025, 90% of Araluen's staff will be trained in Active Support – and we're already seeing the difference.

Active support is a way of working that allows all participants to make choices and engage meaningfully in tasks and relationships. As more staff embrace this approach, more participants are becoming increasingly independent, engaged, and confident.

We're working with La Trobe University's Living with Disability Research Centre to roll out training. The centre is also leading research that involves some participants directly - so we can measure how we're doing and keep improving.

Active Support is already enriching lives and will strengthen Araluen's reputation for quality, person-centred support.

Active Support at Araluen – our progress so far

(since May 2024)

Training delivered so far

2,564 total hours of training
for **64%** of permanent staff
(that's **46%** of our total workforce)

Enabling our leaders

720 hours developing managers and practice leaders in Active Support on how to lead and coach their teams

1,689 hours developing our support worker teams across our day and residential services

Understanding the why

100% of our management and administrative workforce understand the principles and expectations of Active Support

Learning & measuring

55 participants involved in a partnership study with LaTrobe University so we know our Active Support is working and how we can improve

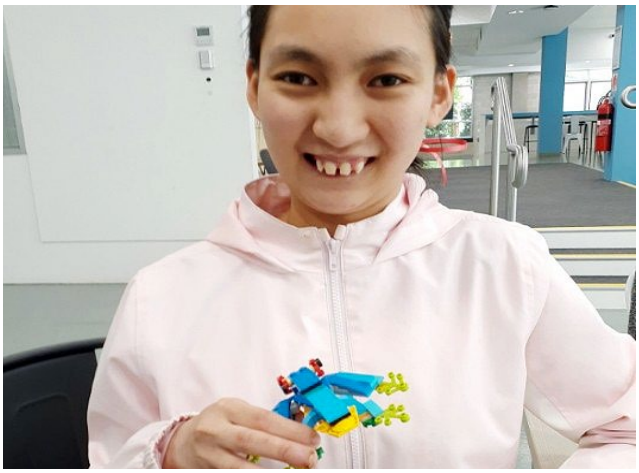
Practise makes perfect

At Chancez Cafés, Angus is serving up more than great coffee – he's building skills, confidence, and experience with every shift. With the right type and amount of support at the right time and encouragement, Angus is making real progress toward his goals, one cup at a time. Every shift brings new wins – and Angus is rising to the challenge!

Sowing the seeds of success

At Mill Park Library, participants from the Diamond Creek and Hurstbridge gardening group are growing fresh herbs and veggies for our Chancez Cafe - and the results are tasty!

This seed-to-plate journey is about teamwork, shared purpose, new skills and growing confidence in manageable steps while recognising that every moment has the potential to learn, grow and connect.



Design, decide, do – building choice and control the fun way

At Primed, Active Support ensures everyone in our new Lego Masters program is included and empowered to try new things, make their own choices, and build confidence in their decisions.

Participants lead their projects, solve problems with minimal staff input, and build fine motor skills as they bring their ideas to life – and yes, they get to take their masterpieces home!

Sharing the joys of home – Carolyn's way

One of the great joys of home is welcoming people into your space.

Recently, Carolyn invited a guest over for lunch - a meaningful moment in a home where people live life on their own terms.

With minimal support, our host with the most prepared a delicious, healthy Mexican feast, complete with all the trimmings. From the beautifully set table to the vibrant, witty conversation, the event reflected Carolyn's unique style and choices.

It was a day made special by the simple pleasures of good food, good company, and the freedom to create your own experience.

Small steps lead to big wins – a toast to Hayse!

Every morning, Hayse makes his own peanut butter and Vegemite toast - a routine he's built step-by-step that brings purpose and growing independence to his day.

With the toaster and bread out, staff encourage Hayse to prepare the rest while it cooks. When it's time to add toppings, staff give just enough help for Hayse to complete the task himself.

This type of graded assistance ensures the right support, at the right time, in the right way. Tasks are broken into manageable parts and help is adjusted so people stay in control and build their skills over time through practise.

Hayse's routine shows how Active Support turns small steps into big wins, helping people learn, do, and enjoy more every day.

Spare rooms, big welcomes!

Araluen currently has opportunities to welcome new housemates in several of our supported homes - and we're looking for the right fit!

If you know someone with a disability who's looking for a friendly, safe, and supportive place to live, maybe we have a place where they can belong and thrive.

We offer quality Supported Independent Living (SIL/SDA) in convenient, popular suburbs, with a focus on helping each person live their happiest, most independent life.

www.araluen.org/options-for-community-living/

Zero Tolerance

Last year, we launched 'Let's Talk', Araluen's zero tolerance to abuse and neglect campaign.

Let's Talk helps staff across Araluen to recognise abuse and neglect in all forms and feel confident having important conversations about it. The campaign encourages a culture where people feel safe to speak up - whether they've seen or suspect something.

So far, we've delivered over 790 hours of training to all staff.

Soon, we're rolling out ***See It*** - the next step in helping everyone at Araluen understand the many ways abuse and neglect can show up.

If you can see abuse, we can stop it!

If you're not sure if what you're seeing is ok, it probably isn't. So, let's talk!

Araluen investigates EVERY report of abuse and neglect thoroughly and fairly. If you have concerns, talk to your manager or use the QR code to tell us. You can report anonymously, but please provide enough info for us to investigate.

www.araluen.org/lets-talk/

Just launched – a new pathway for aspiring jobseekers!

Exciting news: we've taken everything we've learned at Chancez Cafés and created something new: ***a two-year program made especially for school leavers and young NDIS participants*** who want to get ready for work *and* life.

The Chancez Cafes Pathway is hands-on, practical and fun. Participants learn in real café settings, gaining confidence, experience, and the know-how to take on future employment or training.

THE CHANCEZ CAFES PATHWAY IS A FRESH START FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO GROW AND GIVE IT A GO.

www.araluen.org/chancez-cafe/

chancez@araluen.org

2024 – ending it with a BANG!!!!

More than 500 people came together to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Araluen Lower Plenty at our Cake Day and Dinner Dance.

A huge thank you to everyone who made it so special - by attending, donating, sharing photos and memories! What a wonderful way to mark this milestone.

SEE HOW WE WRAPPED UP THE YEAR IN STYLE AT THE ARALUEN LOWER PLENTY 50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER DANCE!

Art Connects

Kil'n it at Lower Plenty

We're thrilled to fire up a new Ceramics Program at Orana, Lower Plenty!

Since our studio opened at Diamond Creek in 2015, participants have honed their skills and created stunning, sought-after pieces featured in galleries and exhibitions.

Now, we're bringing that same opportunity to Orana - where more artists will get the chance to get their hands dirty (in the best way!) as they explore clay, unleash their creativity, and shape their own artistic path. We can't wait to see what they create!

araluen.org/news/

facebook.com/AraluenCentre

instagram.com/araluen_centre/

Support us

Rug up in style – for a limited time!

Winter's coming, so why not stay warm in a limited-edition Araluen hoodie?
These special designs, including t-shirts, were created to celebrate 50 years at Lower Plenty, and won't be around much longer. New looks are on the way – grab your original before they're gone! **Order online at:**

https://araluen.theprintbar.com/

Make change – for two good causes

Araluen is a registered donation partner with Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme in the north! Recycle your bottles and cans with the 10-cent mark and choose to donate your refund directly to us. It's a simple way to support Araluen *and* reduce landfill.

CLICK HERE to go to our website
CLICK HERE to go to the CDS website

ARALUEN

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