

And of Preston Neighbourhood House

Preston Neighbourhood House provides accredited ESL training, skill development and life-long learning opportunities for low income, unengaged members of the Darebin community, improving their readiness for work and capacity to participate effectively in society.

Unlike some other training organizations who specialize in targeted delivery, we believe our strength lies in our balanced program, Occasional Childcare and 3 Year-old Kinder, a personalized approach to training and study pathways, with individual support for learners available through personal development, self-help and leisure activities.

OUR HISTORY

Preston Neighbourhood House grew out of the Northern Resources Centre which was established by the Preston Church of Christ to provide:

- a base for local community groups;
- assistance for people in need.

The particular needs of individuals and groups from a Language Background Other than English (LBOTE), were a key focus of the Northern Resources Centre.

In 1982 *the Preston Neighbourhood House Inc* was established to expand the scope of the *Northern Resources Centre*. Responding to an identified need for opportunities and support for individuals, families and groups to increase independence and quality of life, it aimed to provide opportunities for:

- social interaction;
- mutual support;
- skill development.

Over the years, Preston Neighbourhood House has evolved as an organisation;

- offering a wide range of further education, personal development and leisure courses and activities;
- providing occasional child care;
- supporting various self help and common interest groups;
- taking a leadership role in the inclusion of people with disabilities in its programs;
- linking people with other local services.

OUR COMMUNITY

Preston Neighbourhood House encourages the participation of all members of the local community. Programs are developed with a focus on meeting the needs of:

- people on low incomes;
- people who are isolated;
- women at home with young children;
- people who are unemployed;
- people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD)
- people with a disability;
- older adults.

OUR RANGE OF PROGRAMS

Courses & Activities for Adults

- English Language Studies
- Computer & the Internet Training, incl Cert 1 in I.T.
- Personal Development, incl Introduction to Cert 111 in Community Services
- Cooking & Gardening
- Health & Well Being
- Arts & Crafts

Children's Activities

- Occasional Child Care (*5 sessions per week*)
- Playgroups

Support & Common Interest Groups

- Al Anon
- Auslan
- Families Anonymous
- Standing Strong
- Greek Women's Association
- Step Families Association
- Darebin Greens
- Christian Mission

Special Activities

- Camp Getaway - Subsidised Holidays for Low Income Families.
- Grief & Loss Counselling

OTHER SERVICES

- Information and referrals to other services are provided to the community.
- A twelve seater 1994 Toyota Hiace Mini Bus is available for use by community groups.

OUR LINKS WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

Preston Neighbourhood House **provides a venue** for programs run by other groups including:

- Anglicare - parents group,

- CO-AS-IT (Italian Assistance Association - Workcover Recipients Rehabilitation Support Group),
- C.O.R.E (Anger Management Group),
- NEAMI Darebin (Mental Illness Support),
- City of Darebin, Darebin Community Health Service, Safe Place for Women /Darebin Mental Health Service - Peer Support Program as well as common interest & cultural groups, AAA – Access for All Abilities, Volunteering in Darebin

Co-operative arrangements with **Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE)** result in:

- The location of the PRACE Computer Training Network at Preston Neighbourhood House and the provision of computer training generally.
- Access for our community to a broad range of English as a Second Language and other Adult Education programs at Preston Neighbourhood House and at other local venues.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- After a prolonged period of uncertainty about our tenure in these premises the City of Darebin purchased the premises at 218 and 220 High St, Preston from the Preston Church of Christ on 31st March 2000
- Extensive consultation with the City of Darebin on the potential role of Preston Neighbourhood House in the Intercultural Centre.
- Major renovations to 218 High Street have had a significant contribution to the tone of the “House.”
- Consolidating our membership in the Darebin Network of Neighbourhood Houses
- Membership on Key Focus Groups with the City of Darebin :- Disability Access, Problem Gambling in CALD Communities, Darebin Central - Intercultural Centre.
- Delivery of ESL Language programs to members of CALD communities
- Liaison with Job Network Agencies to provide on-the-job-training for Work For The Dole Participants
- Consolidation of our Occasional Childcare Centre and 3 Year-Old Kinder.
- Developing Return to Work Packages for those in a tenuous workforce situation
- The PNH Friendship Group targeting the lonely and isolated as well as a wide range of leisure & recreational options for women, single parents and men over 45 years.

OUR VISION & MISSION

VISION

Achieving excellence in leading our community towards greater independence and quality of life.

MISSION

Preston Neighbourhood House will encourage and support the local community to increase independence and quality of life by providing high quality, accessible programs and services promoting social interaction, mutual support and skill development.