

STRAIGHT
Arrows



*Services & support for
HIV+ heterosexuals
& their families.*

In association with
The Australian AIDS Fund Inc

CAMP SEASIDE 2005

A camp for families living with HIV/AIDS

Twelve families participated in Camp Seaside this year which ran from the 11th -13th November.

The aim of the Camp was to provide respite to parents living with HIV/AIDS in a safe environment where issues affecting people living with HIV can be discussed amongst peers.

Camp is a space where families can be open about HIV. Take medication in full view for all to see with out fear. We can get tips from others, learn from their experiences and draw from their strengths.



Friday afternoon as people began arriving, children were swept away by others, squeals of delight trailing behind them as they caught up with friends they hadn't seen for ages, leaving parents free to do the same.

Saturday started with the traditional horse riding (after a big feed of bacon and eggs) and for those back at camp massage and catching up with people.

Marg Hayes from the Catholic AIDS Ministry and Inge from the Alfred Hospital came to hang out and talk with families they would not normally see. The children went off to the beach with the volunteers and left the adults to their own devices

Camp Seaside T-shirts were given to all who wanted to decorate them.

With the days activities at an end and all those with sore ends after horse riding were massaged, we gathered in "The Shed" for the Gala event of the week end: The T-Shirt fashion parade.

Parents watched with pride as their children shock off all inhibitions to show off their artistic talents strutting their stuff on the catwalk.



Making the most of the last day, campers set out for the beach or stayed in for a facial by the lovely Suzy before the good-bye BBQ. This year Australian AIDS Fund Inc supplied each family with a disposable camera, which the children took great pleasure in utilizing, we'll see the results soon!!!



For the first time in many years we were blessed with sunny weather. This meant the children were able to spend hours at the beach. For some children this is the only opportunity to be at the beach, build sand castles, swim and paddle around.



Camp Seaside offered the opportunity for parents to network, support each other and rest, The children didn't stop the whole weekend. They were busy running and participating in the children's program put together by our talented children's coordinator, Michael.



Quote from a regular at seaside.

Again this year was a good mix of new families and veteran families. There was a real sense of fellowship, of nurturing and community. It was for me one of the most enjoyable camps so far!

SOMETHING SPECIAL

Families who attend Camp Seaside generally live in a world where there is no other HIV than their own. Sometimes this world is so restricted that even family members, friends and work colleagues know nothing about the families HIV status.

It is important for our members to have opportunities to listen, discuss and learn how to live well and keep healthy whilst dealing with the complexities and challenges of HIV/AIDS

Straight Arrows gives equal importance to health maintenance and the reduction of HIV transmission risks for HIV- Partners, who share the burden of a stigmatising illness. This stigma hinders effective communication about HIV, sex, and disclosure to others and access to services.

Camp Seaside is one of many activities where families can relax and participate in health promotion activities, in a supported environment and a safe place for children to just be children.

Without the generous time of staff and volunteers we would struggle to run this camp, thank you to all who had the chance to be a part of something special.



TIRELESS VOLUNTEERS

Jeff, Michael, Julia, Suzy, Amish, Tony, Andrew and Jan.

Without them there would be no Camp Seaside.

Thanks also to Ashlie and Kirstie as our veteran young people who helped look after our babies.

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